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RUDYARD KIPLING

VOLUME XXI

THE FIVE NATIONS

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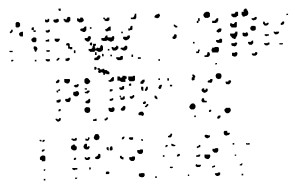
THE FIVE NATIONS



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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1908

THE WRITINGS IN PROSE AND VERSE OF

RUDYARD KIPLING

THE FIVE NATIONS

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DEDICATION

Before a midnight breaks in storm,
Or herded sea in wrath,
Ye know what wavering gusts inform
The greater tempest's path;
Till the loosed wind
Drive all from mind,
Except Distress, which, so will prophets cry,
O'ercame them, houseless, from the unhinting sky.

Ere rivers league against the land
In piratry of flood,
Ye know what waters slip and stand
Where seldom water stood.
Yet who will note,
Till fields afloat,
And washen carcass and the returning well,
Trumpet what these poor heralds strove to tell?

DEDICATION

Ye know who use the Crystal Ball
(To peer by stealth on Doom),
The Shade that, shaping first of all,
Prepares an empty room.
Then doth It pass
Like breath from glass,
But, on the extorted vision bowed intent,
No man considers why It came or went.

Before the years reborn behold
Themselves with stranger eye,
And the sport-making Gods of old,
Like Samson slaying, die,
Many shall hear
The all-pregnant sphere
Bow to the birth and sweat, but—speech denied—
Sit dumb or—dealt in part—fall weak and wide.

Yet instant to fore-shadowed need
The eternal balance swings;
That winged men the Fates may breed
So soon as Fate hath wings.
These shall possess
Our littleness,
And in the imperial task (as worthy) lay
Up our lives' all to piece one giant day.

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BORROWED ALL MY SUNDAY CLO'ES AN' SENT ME 'OME IN PINK 190

THE FIVE NATIONS

THE SEA AND THE HILLS

WHO hath desired the Sea?—the sight of salt water unbounded—
The heave and the halt and the hurl and the crash of the comber wind-hounded?
The sleek-barrelled swell before storm, grey, foamless, enormous, and growing—
Stark calm on the lap of the Line or the crazy-eyed hurricane blowing—
His Sea is no showing the same—his Sea and the same 'neath each showing—
His Sea as she slackens or thrills?
So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise hillmen desire their Hills!

Who hath desired the Sea?—the immense and contemptuous surges?
The shudder, the stumble, the swerve, as the star-stabbing bowsprit emerges?

THE SEA AND THE HILLS

The orderly clouds of the Trades, and the ridged,
roaring sapphire thereunder—
Unheralded cliff-haunting flaws and the head-sail's
low-volleying thunder—
His Sea in no wonder the same—his Sea and the same
through each wonder:
His Sea as she rages or stills?
So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise hillmen
desire their Hills.

Who hath desired the Sea? Her menaces swift as
her mercies,
The in-rolling walls of the fog and the silver-winged
breeze that disperses?
The unstable mined berg going South and the calvings
and groans that declare it;
White water half-guessed overside and the moon
breaking timely to bare it;
His Sea as his fathers have dared—his Sea as his
children shall dare it—
His Sea as she serves him or kills?
So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise hillmen
desire their Hills.

Who hath desired the Sea? Her excellent loneliness
rather
Than forecourts of kings, and her outermost pits than
the streets where men gather

THE SEA AND THE HILLS

Inland, among dust, under trees—inland where the
slayer may slay him
Inland, out of reach of her arms, and the bosom
whereon he must lay him—
His Sea at the first that betrayed—at the last that
shall never betray him—
His Sea that his being fulfils ?
So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise hillmen
desire their Hills.

THE BELL BUOY

THEY christened my brother of old—
And a saintly name he bears—
They gave him his place to hold
At the head of the belfry-stairs,
Where the minster-towers stand
And the breeding kestrels cry.
Would I change with my brother a league inland?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!

In the flush of the hot June prime,
O'er smooth flood-tides afire,
I hear him hurry the chime
To the bidding of checked Desire;
Till the sweated ringers tire
And the wild bob-majors die.
Could I wait for my turn in the godly choir?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!

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THE BELL BUOY

When the smoking scud is blown,
  When the greasy wind-rack lowers,
Apart and at peace and alone,
  He counts the changeless hours.
  He wars with darkling Powers
(I war with a darkling sea);
  Would he stoop to my work in the gusty mirk?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not he!

There was never a priest to pray,
  There was never a hand to toll,
When they made me guard of the bay,
  And moored me over the shoal.
  I rock, I reel, and I roll—
My four great hammers ply—
  Could I speak or be still at the Church's will?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!

The landward marks have failed,
  The fog-bank glides unguessed,
The seaward lights are veiled,
  The spent deep feigns her rest:
  But my ear is laid to her breast,
I lift to the swell—I cry!
  Could I wait in sloth on the Church's oath?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!

THE BELL BUOY

At the careless end of night
I thrill to the nearing screw,
I turn in the nearing light
And I call to the drowsy crew;
And the mud boils foul and blue
As the blind bow backs away.
Will they give me their thanks if they clear the banks?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not they!

The beach-pools cake and skim,
The bursting spray-heads freeze,
I gather on crown and rim
The grey, grained ice of the seas,
Where, sheathed from bitt to trees,
The plunging colliers lie.
Would I barter my place for the Church's grace?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!

Through the blur of the whirling snow,
Or the black of the inky sleet,
The lanterns gather and grow,
And I look for the homeward fleet.
Rattle of block and sheet—
"Ready about—stand by!"
Shall I ask them a fee ere they fetch the quay?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!

THE BELL BUOY

I dip and I surge and I swing
In the rip of the racing tide,
By the gates of doom I sing,
On the horns of death I ride.
A ship-length overside,
Between the course and the sand,
Fretted and bound I bide
Peril whereof I cry.
Would I change with my brother a league inland?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!

CRUISERS

As our mother the Frigate, bepainted and fine,
Made play for her bully the Ship of the Line;
So we, her bold daughters by iron and fire,
Accost and decoy to our masters' desire.

Now pray you consider what toils we endure,
Night-walking wet sea-lanes, a guard and a lure;
Since half of our trade is that same pretty sort
As mettlesome wenches do practise in port.

For this is our office: to spy and make room,
As hiding yet guiding the foe to their doom;
Surrounding, confounding, to bait and betray
And tempt them to battle the sea's width away.

The pot-bellied merchant foreboding no wrong
With headlight and sidelight he lieth along,
Till, lightless and lightfoot and lurking, leap we
To force him discover his business by sea.

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CRUISERS

And when we have wakened the lust of a foe,
To draw him by flight toward our bullies we go,
Till, 'ware of strange smoke stealing nearer, he flies—
Or our bullies close in for to make him good prize.

So, when we have spied on the path of their host,
One flieth to carry that word to the coast;
And, lest by false doubling they turn and go free,
One lieth behind them to follow and see.

Anon we return, being gathered again,
Across the sad valleys all drabbled with rain—
Across the grey ridges all crispèd and curled—
To join the long dance round the curve of the world.

The bitter salt spindrift: the sun-glare likewise:
The moon-track a-quiver bewilders our eyes,
Where, linking and lifting, our sisters we hail
'Twixt wrench of cross-surges or plunge of head-gale.

As maidens awaiting the bride to come forth
Make play with light jestings and wit of no worth,
So, widdershins circling the bride-bed of death,
Each fleereth her neighbour and signeth and saith:—

"What see ye? Their signals, or levin afar?
"What hear ye? God's thunder, or guns of our war?

CRUISERS

" What mark ye? Their smoke, or the cloud-rack
outblown?
" What chase ye? Their lights, or the Day-star low
down?"

So, times past all number deceived by false shows,
Deceiving we cumber the road of our foes,
For this is our virtue: to track and betray;
Preparing great battles the sea's width away.

Now peace is at end and our peoples take heart,
For the laws are clean gone that restrained our art;
Up and down the near headlands and against the far
wind
We are loosed (O be swift!) to the work of our kind!

THE DESTROYERS

The strength of twice three thousand horse
That seek the single goal;
The line that holds the rending course,
The hate that swings the whole:
The stripped hulls, slinking through the gloom,
At gaze and gone again—
The Brides of Death that wait the groom—
The Choosers of the Slain!

Offshore where sea and skyline blend
In rain, the daylight dies;
The sullen, shouldering swells attend
Night and our sacrifice.
Adown the stricken capes no flare—
No mark on spit or bar,—
Girdled and desperate we dare
The blindfold game of war.

THE DESTROYERS

Nearer the up-flung beams that spell
  The council of our foes;
Clearer the barking guns that tell
  Their scattered flank to close.
Sheer to the trap they crowd their way
  From ports for this unbarred.
Quiet, and count our laden prey,
  The convoy and her guard!

On shoal with scarce a foot below,
  Where rock and islet throng,
Hidden and hushed we watch them throw
  Their anxious lights along.
Not here, not here your danger lies—
  (Stare hard, O hooded eyne!)
Save where the dazed rock-pigeons rise
  The lit cliffs give no sign.

Therefore—to break the rest ye seek,
  The Narrow Seas to clear—
Hark to the Syren's whimpering shriek—
  The driven death is here!
Look to your van a league away,—
  What midnight terror stays
The bulk that checks against the spray
  Her crackling tops ablaze?

THE DESTROYERS

Hit, and hard hit! The blow went home,
The muffled, knocking stroke—
The steam that overruns the foam—
The foam that thins to smoke—
The smoke that cloaks the deep aboil—
The deep that chokes her throes
Till, streaked with ash and sleeked with oil,
The lukewarm whirlpools close!

A shadow down the sickened wave
Long since her slayer fled:
But hear their chattering quick-fires rave
Astern, abeam, ahead!
Panic that shells the drifting spar—
Loud waste with none to check—
Mad fear that rakes a scornful star
Or sweeps a consort's deck!

Now, while their silly smoke hangs thick,
Now ere their wits they find,
Lay in and lance them to the quick—
Our gallied whales are blind!
Good luck to those that see the end,
Good-bye to those that drown—
For each his chance as chance shall send—
And God for all! *Shut down!*

THE DESTROYERS

The strength of twice three thousand horse
That serve the one command;
The hand that heaves the headlong force,
The hate that backs the hand:
The doom-bolt in the darkness freed,
The mine that splits the main;
The white-hot wake, the 'wildering speed—
The Choosers of the Slain!

WHITE HORSES

Where run your colts at pasture?
Where hide your mares to breed?
'Mid bergs about the Ice-cap
Or wove Sargasso weed;
By chartless reef and channel,
Or crafty coastwise bars,
But most the ocean-meadows
All purple to the stars!

Who holds the rein upon you?
The latest gale let free.
What meat is in your mangers?
The glut of all the sea.
'Twixt tide and tide's returning
Great store of newly dead,—
The bones of those that faced us,
And the hearts of those that fled.

WHITE HORSES

Afar, offshore and single,
  Some stallion, rearing swift,
Neighs hungry for new fodder,
  And calls us to the drift.
Then down the cloven ridges—
  A million hooves unshod—
Break forth the mad White Horses
  To seek their meat from God!

Girth-deep in hissing water
  Our furious vanguard strains—
Through mist of mighty tramplings
  Roll up the fore-blown manes—
A hundred leagues to leeward,
  Ere yet the deep is stirred,
The groaning rollers carry
  The coming of the herd!

Whose hand may grip your nostrils—
  Your forelock who may hold?
E'en they that use the broads with us
  The riders bred and bold,
That spy upon our matings,
  That rope us where we run—
They know the strong White Horses
  From father unto son.

WHITE HORSES

We breathe about their cradles,
  We race their babes ashore,
We snuff against their thresholds,
  We nuzzle at their door;
By day with stamping squadrons,
  By night in whinnying droves,
Creep up the wise White Horses,
  To call them from their loves.

And come they for your calling?
  No wit of man may save.
They hear the loosed White Horses
  Above their father's grave;
And, kin of those we crippled,
  And, sons of those we slew,
Spur down the wild white riders
  To school the herds anew.

What service have ye paid them,
  Oh jealous steeds and strong?
Save we that throw their weaklings,
  Is none dare work them wrong;
While thick around the homestead
  Our snow-backed leaders graze—
A guard behind their plunder,
  And a veil before their ways.

WHITE HORSES

With march and countermarchings—
  With weight of wheeling hosts—
Stray mob or bands embattled—
  We ring the chosen coasts:
And, careless of our clamour
  That bids the stranger fly,
At peace within our pickets
  The wild white riders lie.

. . . . .

Trust ye the curdled hollows—
  Trust ye the neighing wind—
Trust ye the moaning ground-swell—
  Our herds are close behind!
To bray your foeman's armies—
  To chill and snap his sword—
Trust ye the wild White Horses,
  The Horses of the Lord!

THE SECOND VOYAGE

WE'VE sent our little Cupids all ashore—
They were frightened, they were tired, they were cold;
Our sails of silk and purple go to store,
And we've cut away our mast of beaten gold
(Foul weather!)
Oh 'tis hemp and singing pine for to stand against the brine,
But Love he is the master as of old!

The sea has shorn our galleries away,
The salt has soiled our gilding past remede;
Our paint is flaked and blistered by the spray,
Our sides are half a fathom furred in weed
(Foul weather!)
And the doves of Venus fled and the petrels came instead,
But Love he was our master at our need!

THE SECOND VOYAGE

'Was Youth would keep no vigil at the bow,
'Was Pleasure at the helm too drunk to steer—
We've shipped three able quartermasters now,
Men call them Custom, Reverence, and Fear
(Foul weather!)
They are old and scarred and plain, but we'll run no risk again
From any Port o' Paphos mutineer!

We seek no more the tempest for delight,
We skirt no more the indraught and the shoal—
We ask no more of any day or night
Than to come with least adventure to our goal
(Foul weather!)
What we find we needs must brook, but we do not go to look,
Nor tempt the Lord our God that saved us whole!

Yet, caring so, not overly we care
To brace and trim for every foolish blast,
If the squall be pleased to sweep us unaware,
He may bellow off to leeward like the last
(Foul weather!)
We will blame it on the deep (for the watch must have their sleep),
And Love can come and wake us when 'tis past.

THE SECOND VOYAGE

Oh launch them down with music from the beach,
  Oh warp them out with garlands from the quays—
Most resolute—a damsel unto each—
  New prows that seek the old Hesperides!
    (Foul weather!)
Though we know the voyage is vain, yet we see our path again
  In the saffroned bridesails scenting all the seas!
    (Foul weather!)

THE DYKES

WE have no heart for the fishing, we have no hand
for the oar—
All that our fathers taught us of old pleases us now
no more;
All that our own hearts bid us believe we doubt
where we do not deny—
There is no proof in the bread we eat or rest in the
toil we ply.

Look you, our foreshore stretches far through sea-
gate, dyke, and groin—
Made land all, that our fathers made, where the flats
and the fairway join.
They forced the sea a sea-league back. They died,
and their work stood fast.
We were born to peace in the lee of the dykes, but
the time of our peace is past.

THE DYKES

Far off, the full tide clambers and slips, mouthing and
testing all,
Nipping the flanks of the water-gates, baying along
the wall;
Turning the shingle, returning the shingle, changing
the set of the sand . . .
We are too far from the beach, men say, to know how
the outworks stand.

So we come down, uneasy, to look, uneasily pacing
the beach.
These are the dykes our fathers made: we have never
known a breach.
Time and again has the gale blown by and we were
not afraid;
Now we come only to look at the dykes—at the dykes
our fathers made.

O'er the marsh where the homesteads cower apart,
the harried sunlight flies,
Shifts and considers, wanes and recovers, scatters and
sickens and dies—
An evil ember bedded in ash—a spark blown west by
the wind . . .
We are surrendered to-night and the sea—the gale
and the tide behind!

THE DYKES

At the bridge of the lower saltings the cattle gather and blare,
Roused by the feet of running men, dazed by the lantern glare.
Unbar and let them away for their lives—the levels drown as they stand,
Where the flood-wash forces the sluices aback and the ditches deliver inland.

Ninefold deep to the top of the dykes the galloping breakers stride,
And their overcarried spray is a sea—a sea on the landward side.
Coming, like stallions they paw with their hooves, going they snatch with their teeth,
Till the bents and the furze and the sand are dragged out, and the old-time wattles beneath!

Bid men gather fuel for fire, the tar and the oil and the tow—
Flame we shall need, not smoke, in the dark if the riddled sea-banks go.
Bid the ringers watch in the tower (who knows what the dawn shall prove?)
Each with his rope between his feet and the trembling bells above.

THE DYKES

Now we can only wait till the day, wait and apportion
our shame!
These are the dykes our fathers left, but we would
not look to the same.
Time and again were we warned of the dykes, time
and again we delayed:
Now, it may fall, we have slain our sons as our fathers
we have betrayed.

. . . . . .

Walking along the wreck of the dykes, watching the
work of the seas,
These were the dykes our fathers made to our great
profit and ease;
But the peace is gone and the profit is gone, and the
old sure day withdrawn . . .
That our own houses show as strange when we come
back in the dawn!

THE SONG OF DIEGO VALDEZ

THE God of Fair Beginnings
  Hath prospered here my hand—
The cargoes of my lading,
  And the keels of my command.
For out of many ventures
  That sailed with hope as high,
My own have made the better trade,
  And Admiral am I!

To me my King's much honour,
  To me my people's love—
To me the pride of Princes
  And power all pride above;
To me the shouting cities,
  To me the mob's refrain:—
"Who knows not noble Valdez,
  Hath never heard of Spain."

THE SONG OF DIEGO VALDEZ

But I remember comrades—
  Old playmates on new seas—
Whenas we traded orpiment
  Among the savages—
A thousand leagues to south'ard
  And thirty years removed—
They knew not noble Valdez,
  But me they knew and loved.

Then they that found good liquor,
  They drank it not alone,
And they that found fair plunder,
  They told us every one,
Behind our chosen islands
  Or secret shoals between,
When, walty from far voyage,
  We gathered to careen.

There burned our breaming-fagots
  All pale along the shore:
There rose our worn pavilions—
  A sail above an oar:
As flashed each yearning anchor
  Through mellow seas afire,
So swift our careless captains
  Rowed each to his desire!

THE SONG OF DIEGO VALDEZ

Where lay our loosened harness?
  Where turned our naked feet?
Whose tavern 'mid the palm-trees?
  What quenchings of what heat?
Oh fountain in the desert!
  Oh cistern in the waste!
Oh bread we ate in secret!
  Oh cup we spilled in haste!

The youth new-taught of longing,
  The widow curbed and wan—
The goodwife proud at season,
  And the maid aware of man;
All souls unslaked, consuming,
  Defrauded in delays,
Desire not more than quittance
  Than I those forfeit days!

I dreamed to wait my pleasure
  Unchanged my spring would bide:
Wherefore, to wait my pleasure,
  I put my spring aside
Till, first in face of Fortune,
  And last in mazed disdain,
I made Diego Valdez
  High Admiral of Spain.

THE SONG OF DIEGO VALDEZ

Then walked no wind 'neath Heaven
  Nor surge that did not aid—
I dared extreme occasion,
  Nor ever one betrayed.
They wrought a deeper treason—
  (Led seas that served my needs!)
They sold Diego Valdez
  To bondage of great deeds.

The tempest flung me seaward,
  And pinned and bade me hold
The course I might not alter—
  And men esteemed me bold!
The calms embayed my quarry,
  The fog-wreath sealed his eyes;
The dawn-wind brought my topsails—
  And men esteemed me wise!

Yet 'spite my tyrant triumphs
  Bewildered, dispossessed—
My dream held I before me—
  My vision of my rest;
But, crowned by Fleet and People,
  And bound by King and Pope—
Stands here Diego Valdez
  To rob me of my hope!

THE SONG OF DIEGO VALDEZ

No prayer of mine shall move him,
  No word of his set free
The Lord of Sixty Pennants
  And the Steward of the Sea.
His will can loose ten thousand
  To seek their loves again—
But not Diego Valdez,
  High Admiral of Spain.

There walks no wind 'neath Heaven
  Nor wave that shall restore
The old careening riot
  And the clamorous, crowded shore—
The fountain in the desert,
  The cistern in the waste,
The bread we ate in secret,
  The cup we spilled in haste!

Now call I to my Captains—
  For council fly the sign,
Now leap their zealous galleys
  Twelve-oared across the brine.
To me the straiter prison,
  To me the heavier chain—
To me Diego Valdez,
  High Admiral of Spain!

THE BROKEN MEN

FOR things we never mention,
For Art misunderstood—
For excellent intention
That did not turn to good;
From ancient tales' renewing,
From clouds we would not clear—
Beyond the Law's pursuing
We fled, and settled here.

We took no tearful leaving,
We bade no long good-byes;
Men talked of crime and thieving,
Men wrote of fraud and lies.
To save our injured feelings
'Twas time and time to go—
Behind was dock and Dartmoor,
Ahead lay Callao!

THE BROKEN MEN

The widow and the orphan
  That pray for ten per cent.,
They clapped their trailers on us
  To spy the road we went.
They watched the foreign sailings
  (They scan the shipping still),
And that's your Christian people
  Returning good for ill!

God bless the thoughtful islands
  Where never warrants come!
God bless the just Republics
  That give a man a home,
That ask no foolish questions,
  But set him on his feet;
And save his wife and daughters
  From the workhouse and the street!

On church and square and market
  The noonday silence falls;
You'll hear the drowsy mutter
  Of the fountain in our halls.
Asleep amid the yuccas
  The city takes her ease—
Till twilight brings the land-wind
  To our clicking jalousies.

THE BROKEN MEN

Day long the diamond weather,
The high, unaltered blue—
The smell of goats and incense
And the mule-bells tinkling through.
Day long the warder ocean
That keeps us from our kin,
And once a month our levee
When the English mail comes in.

You'll find us up and waiting
To treat you at the bar;
You'll find us less exclusive
Than the average English are.
We'll meet you with our carriage,
Too glad to show you round,
But—we do not lunch on steamers,
For they are English ground.

We sail o' nights to England
And join our smiling Boards;
Our wives go in with Viscounts
And our daughters dance with Lords.
But behind our princely doings,
And behind each coup we make,
We feel there's Something Waiting,
And—we meet It when we wake.

THE BROKEN MEN

Ah God! One sniff of England—
To greet our flesh and blood—
To hear the hansoms slurring
Once more through London mud!
Our towns of wasted honour—
Our streets of lost delight!
How stands the old Lord Warden?
Are Dover's cliffs still white?

THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

Now the Four-way Lodge is opened, now the
Hunting Winds are loose—
Now the Smokes of Spring go up to clear the brain;
Now the Young Men's hearts are troubled for the
whisper of the Trues,
Now the Red Gods make their medicine again!
Who hath seen the beaver busied? Who hath
watched the black-tail mating?
Who hath lain alone to hear the wild-goose cry?
Who hath worked the chosen water where the
ouananiche is waiting,
Or the sea-trout's jumping-crazy for the fly?

He must go—go—go away from here!
On the other side the world he's overdue.
'Send your road is clear before you when the old
Spring-fret comes o'er you
And the Red Gods call for you!

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THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

So for one the wet sail arching through the rainbow
round the bow,
And for one the creak of snow-shoes on the crust;
And for one the lakeside lilies where the bull-moose
waits the cow,
And for one the mule-train coughing in the dust.
Who hath smelt wood-smoke at twilight? Who hath
heard the birch-log burning?
Who is quick to read the noises of the night?
Let him follow with the others, for the Young Men's
feet are turning
To the camps of proved desire and known delight!
Let him go—go, etc.

I

Do you know the blackened timber—do you know
that racing stream
With the raw, right-angled log-jam at the end;
And the bar of sun-warmed shingle where a man
may bask and dream
To the click of shod canoe-poles round the bend?
It is there that we are going with our rods and reels
and traces,
To a silent smoky Indian that we know—
To a couch of new-pulled hemlock with the starlight
on our faces,
For the Red Gods call us out and we must go!
They must go—go, etc.

THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

II

Do you know the shallow Baltic where the seas are steep and short,
Where the bluff, lee-boarded fishing-luggers ride?
Do you know the joy of threshing leagues to leeward of your port
On a coast you've lost the chart of overside?
It is there that I am going, with an extra hand to bale her—
Just one able 'long-shore loafer that I know.
He can take his chance of drowning, while I sail and sail and sail her,
For the Red Gods call me out and I must go!

He must go—go, etc.

III

Do you know the pile-built village where the sago-dealers trade—
Do you know the reek of fish and wet bamboo?
Do you know the steaming stillness of the orchid-scented glade
When the blazoned, bird-winged butterflies flap through?

THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

It is there that I am going with my camphor, net, and boxes,
To a gentle, yellow pirate that I know—
To my little wailing lemurs, to my palms and flying-foxes,
For the Red Gods call me out and I must go!

He must go—go, etc.

IV

Do you know the world's white roof-tree—do you know that windy rift
Where the baffling mountain eddies chop and change?
Do you know the long day's patience, belly-down on frozen drift,
While the head of heads is feeding out of range?
It is there that I am going, where the boulders and the snow lie,
With a trusty, nimble tracker that I know.
I have sworn an oath, to keep it on the Horns of Ovis Poli,
And the Red Gods call me out and I must go!

He must go—go, etc.

THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

Now the Four-way Lodge is opened—now the
Smokes of Council rise—
Pleasant smokes, ere yet 'twixt trail and trail they
choose—
Now the girths and ropes are tested: now they pack
their last supplies:
Now our Young Men go to dance before the
Trues!
Who shall meet them at those altars—who shall
light them to that shrine?
Velvet-footed, who shall guide them to their goal?
Unto each the voice and vision: unto each his spoor
and sign—
Lonely mountain in the Northland, misty sweat-bath
'neath the Line—
And to each a man that knows his naked soul!

White or yellow, black or copper, he is waiting, as a
lover,
Smoke of funnel, dust of hooves, or beat of train—
Where the high grass hides the horseman or the
glaring flats discover—
Where the steamer hails the landing, or the surf-
boat brings the rover—
Where the rails run out in sand-drift . . . Quick!
ah, heave the camp-kit over!
For the Red Gods make their medicine again!

THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

And we go—go—go away from here!
On the other side the world we're overdue!
'Send the road is clear before you when the old
Spring-fret comes o'er you
And the Red Gods call for you!

THE TRUCE OF THE BEAR

YEARLY, with tent and rifle, our careless white men go
By the pass called Muttianee, to shoot in the vale below.
Yearly by Muttianee he follows our white men in—
Matun, the old blind beggar, bandaged from brow to chin.

Eyeless, noseless, and lipless—toothless, broken of speech,
Seeking a dole at the doorway he mumbles his tale to each;
Over and over the story, ending as he began:
"Make ye no truce with Adam-zad—the Bear that walks like a man!

"There was a flint in my musket—pricked and primed was the pan,
When I went hunting Adam-zad—the Bear that stands like a man.

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THE TRUCE OF THE BEAR

I looked my last on the timber, I looked my last on the snow,
When I went hunting Adam-zad fifty summers ago!

"I knew his times and his seasons, as he knew mine, that fed
By night in the ripened maize-field and robbed my house of bread;
I knew his strength and cunning, as he knew mine, that crept
At dawn to the crowded goat-pens and plundered while I slept.

"Up from his stony playground—down from his well-digged lair—
Out on the naked ridges ran Adam-zad the Bear;
Groaning, grunting, and roaring, heavy with stolen meals,
Two long marches to northward, and I was at his heels!

"Two full marches to northward, at the fall of the second night,
I came on mine enemy Adam-zad all panting from his flight.
There was a charge in the musket—pricked and primed was the pan—
My finger crooked on the trigger—when he reared up like a man.

THE TRUCE OF THE BEAR

"Horrible, hairy, human, with paws like hands in prayer,
Making his supplication rose Adam-zad the Bear!
I looked at the swaying shoulders, at the paunch's swag and swing,
And my heart was touched with pity for the monstrous, pleading thing.

"Touched with pity and wonder, I did not fire then . . .
I have looked no more on women—I have walked no more with men.
Nearer he tottered and nearer, with paws like hands that pray—
From brow to jaw that steel-shod paw, it ripped my face away!

"Sudden, silent, and savage, searing as flame the blow—
Faceless I fell before his feet, fifty summers ago.
I heard him grunt and chuckle—I heard him pass to his den,
He left me blind to the darkened years and the little mercy of men.

"Now ye go down in the morning with guns of the newer style,
That load (I have felt) in the middle and range (I have heard) a mile?

THE TRUCE OF THE BEAR

Luck to the white man's rifle, that shoots so fast and true,
But—pay, and I lift my bandage and show what the Bear can do!"

(Flesh like slag in the furnace, knobbed and withered and grey —
Matun, the old blind beggar, he gives good worth for his pay.)
" Rouse him at noon in the bushes, follow and press him hard—
Not for his ragings and roarings flinch ye from Adam-zad.

" But (pay, and I put back the bandage) this is the time to fear,
When he stands up like a tired man, tottering near and near;
When he stands up as pleading, in wavering, man-brute guise,
When he veils the hate and cunning of the little, swinish eyes;

" When he shows as seeking quarter, with paws like hands in prayer,
That is the time of peril—the time of the Truce of the Bear!"

THE TRUCE OF THE BEAR

Eyeless, noseless, and lipless, asking a dole at the door,
Matun, the old blind beggar, he tells it o'er and o'er;
Fumbling and feeling the rifles, warming his hands at the flame,
Hearing our careless white men talk of the morrow's game;

Over and over the story, ending as he began:—
" There is no truce with Adam-zad, the Bear that looks like a man! "

THE OLD MEN

This is our lot if we live so long and labour unto the end—
That we outlive the impatient years and the much too patient friend:
And because we know we have breath in our mouth and think we have thought in our head,
We shall assume that we are alive, whereas we are really dead.

We shall not acknowledge that old stars fade or alien planets arise
(That the sere bush buds or the desert blooms or the ancient well-head dries),
Or any new compass wherewith new men adventure 'neath new skies.

We shall lift up the ropes that constrained our youth to bind on our children's hands;
We shall call to the water below the bridges to return and replenish our lands;
We shall harness horses (Death's own pale horses) and scholarly plough the sands.

THE OLD MEN

We shall lie down in the eye of the sun for lack of a
light on our way—
We shall rise up when the day is done and chirrup,
"Behold, it is day!"
We shall abide till the battle is won ere we amble
into the fray.

We shall peck out and discuss and dissect, and evert
and extrude to our mind,
The flaccid tissues of long-dead issues offensive to
God and mankind—
(Precisely like vultures over an ox that the Army
has left behind).

We shall make walk preposterous ghosts of the glo-
ries we once created—
(Immodestly smearing from muddled palettes amaz-
ing pigments mismated)
And our friends will weep when we ask them with
boasts if our natural force be abated.

The Lamp of our Youth will be utterly out: but we
shall subsist on the smell of it,
And whatever we do, we shall fold our hands and
suck our gums and think well of it.
Yes, we shall be perfectly pleased with our work,
and that is the perfectest Hell of it!

THE OLD MEN

This is our lot if we live so long and listen to those
who love us—
That we are shunned by the people about and shamed
by the Powers above us.
Wherefore be free of your harness betimes; but being
free be assured,
That he who hath not endured to the death, from his
birth he hath never endured!

THE EXPLORER

"THERE'S no sense in going further—it's the edge
of cultivation,"
So they said, and I believed it—broke my land and
sowed my crop—
Built my barns and strung my fences in the little
border station
Tucked away below the foothills where the trails run
out and stop.

Till a voice, as bad as Conscience, rang interminable
changes
On one everlasting Whisper day and night repeated
—so:
"Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look
behind the Ranges—
"Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and wait-
ing for you. Go!"

THE EXPLORER

So I went, worn out of patience; 'never told my
nearest neighbours—
Stole away with pack and ponies—left 'em drinking
in the town;
And the faith that moveth mountains didn't seem to
help my labours
As I faced the sheer main-ranges, whipping up and
leading down.

March by march I puzzled through 'em, turning
flanks and dodging shoulders,
Hurried on in hope of water, headed back for lack of
grass;
Till I camped above the tree-line—drifted snow and
naked boulders—
Felt free air astir to windward—knew I'd stumbled
on the Pass.

Thought to name it for the finder: but that night
the Norther found me—
Froze and killed the plains-bred ponies: so I called
the camp Despair
(It's the Railway Gap to-day, though). Then my
Whisper waked to hound me:—
"Something lost behind the Ranges. Over yonder.
Go you there!"

THE EXPLORER

Then I knew, the while I doubted—knew His Hand
was certain o'er me.
Still—it might be self-delusion—scores of better men
had died—
I could reach the township living, but . . . He
knows what terrors tore me . . .
But I didn't . . . but I didn't. I went down the
other side.

Till the snow ran out in flowers, and the flowers
turned to aloes,
And the aloes sprung to thickets and a brimming
stream ran by;
But the thickets dwined to thorn-scrub, and the
water drained to shallows—
And I dropped again on desert, blasted earth, and
blasting sky. . . .

I remember lighting fires; I remember sitting by
them;
I remember seeing faces, hearing voices through the
smoke;
I remember they were fancy—for I threw a stone to
try 'em.
"Something lost behind the Ranges," was the only
word they spoke.

THE EXPLORER

I remember going crazy. I remember that I knew
it
When I heard myself hallooing to the funny folk I
saw.
Very full of dreams that desert: but my two legs
took me through it . . .
And I used to watch 'em moving with the toes all
black and raw.

But at last the country altered—White man's country
past disputing—
Rolling grass and open timber, with a hint of hills
behind—
There I found me food and water, and I lay a week
recruiting,
Got my strength and lost my nightmares. Then I
entered on my find.

Thence I ran my first rough survey—chose my trees
and blazed and ringed 'em—
Week by week I pried and sampled—week by week
my findings grew.
Saul he went to look for donkeys, and by God he
found a kingdom!
But by God, who sent His Whisper, I had struck the
worth of two!

THE EXPLORER

Up along the hostile mountains, where the hair-
poised snow-slide shivers—
Down and through the big fat marshes that the
virgin ore-bed stains,
Till I heard the mile-wide mutterings of unimagined
rivers,
And beyond the nameless timber saw illimitable
plains!

'Plotted sites of future cities, traced the easy grades
between 'em;
Watched unharnessed rapids wasting fifty thousand
head an hour;
Counted leagues of water-frontage through the axe-
ripe woods that screen 'em—
Saw the plant to feed a people—up and waiting for
the power!

Well I know who'll take the credit—all the clever
chaps that followed—
Came, a dozen men together—never knew my desert
fears;
Tracked me by the camps I'd quitted, used the water-
holes I'd hollowed.
They'll go back and do the talking. They'll be
called the Pioneers!

THE EXPLORER

They will find my sites of townships—not the cities
that I set there.
They will rediscover rivers—not my rivers heard at
night.
By my own old marks and bearings they will show
me how to get there,
By the lonely cairns I builded they will guide my
feet aright.

Have I named one single river? Have I claimed one
single acre?
Have I kept one single nugget—(barring samples)?
No, not I.
Because my price was paid me ten times over by my
Maker.
But you wouldn't understand it. You go up and
occupy.

Ores you'll find there; wood and cattle; water-
transit sure and steady
(That should keep the railway rates down), coal and
iron at your doors.
God took care to hide that country till He judged
His people ready,
Then He chose me for His Whisper, and I've found
it, and it's yours!

THE EXPLORER

Yes, your "Never-never country"—yes, your "edge
of cultivation"
And "no sense in going further"—till I crossed the
range to see.
God forgive me! No, *I* didn't. It's God's present
to our nation.
Anybody might have found it but—His Whisper
came to Me!

THE WAGE-SLAVES

OH glorious are the guarded heights
  Where guardian souls abide—
Self-exiled from our gross delights—
  Above, beyond, outside:
An ampler arc their spirit swings—
  Commands a juster view—
We have their word for all these things,
  Nor doubt their words are true.

Yet we the bondslaves of our day,
  Whom dirt and danger press—
Co-heirs of insolence, delay,
  And leagued unfaithfulness—
Such is our need must seek indeed
  And, having found, engage
The men who merely do the work
  For which they draw the wage.

THE WAGE-SLAVES

From forge and farm and mine and bench,
  Deck, altar, outpost lone—
Mill, school, battalion, counter, trench,
  Rail, senate, sheepfold, throne—
Creation's cry goes up on high
  From age to cheated age:
"Send us the men who do the work
  For which they draw the wage."

Words cannot help nor wit achieve,
  Nor e'en the all-gifted fool,
Too weak to enter, bide, or leave
  The lists he cannot rule.
Beneath the sun we count on none
  Our evil to assuage,
Except the men that do the work
  For which they draw the wage.

When through the Gates of Stress and Strain
  Comes forth the vast Event—
The simple, sheer, sufficing, sane
  Result of labour spent—
They that have wrought the end unthought
  Be neither saint nor sage,
But men who merely did the work
  For which they drew the wage.

THE WAGE-SLAVES

Wherefore to these the Fates shall bend
(And all old idle things—)
Wherefore on these shall Power attend
Beyond the grasp of kings:
Each in his place, by right, not grace,
Shall rule his heritage—
The men who simply do the work
For which they draw the wage.

Not such as scorn the loitering street,
Or waste, to earn its praise,
Their noontide's unreturning heat
About their morning ways:
But such as dower each mortgaged hour
Alike with clean courage—
Even the men who do the work
For which they draw the wage—
Men like to Gods that do the work
For which they draw the wage—
Begin—continue—close the work
For which they draw the wage!

THE BURIAL

C. J. RHODES, buried in the Matoppos, April 10, 1902

WHEN that great Kings return to clay,
  Or Emperors in their pride,
Grief of a day shall fill a day,
  Because its creature died.
But we—we reckon not with those
  Whom the mere Fates ordain,
This Power that wrought on us and goes
  Back to the Power again.

Dreamer devout, by vision led
  Beyond our guess or reach,
The travail of his spirit bred
  Cities in place of speech.
So huge the all-mastering thought that
    drove—
  So brief the term allowed—
Nations, not words, he linked to prove
  His faith before the crowd.

THE BURIAL

It is his will that he look forth
  Across the world he won—
The granite of the ancient North—
  Great spaces washed with sun.
There shall he patient make his seat
  (As when the Death he dared),
And there await a people's feet
  In the paths that he prepared.

There, till the vision he foresaw
  Splendid and whole arise,
And unimagined Empires draw
  To council 'neath his skies,
The immense and brooding Spirit still
  Shall quicken and control.
Living he was the land, and dead,
  His soul shall be her soul!

GENERAL JOUBERT

(Died March 27, 1900)

WITH those that bred, with those that loosed the strife,
He had no part whose hands were clear of gain;
But subtle, strong, and stubborn, gave his life
To a lost cause, and knew the gift was vain.

Later shall rise a people, sane and great,
Forged in strong fires, by equal war made one;
Telling old battles over without hate—
Not least his name shall pass from sire to son.

He may not meet the onsweep of our van
In the doomed city when we close the score.
Yet o'er his grave—his grave that holds a man—
Our deep-tongued guns shall answer his once more!

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THE PALACE

WHEN I was a King and a Mason—a Master proven and skilled—
I cleared me ground for a palace such as a King should build.
I decreed and dug down to my levels. Presently, under the silt,
I came on the wreck of a palace such as a King had built.

There was no worth in the fashion—there was no wit in the plan—
Hither and thither, aimless, the ruined footings ran—
Masonry, brute, mishandled, but carven on every stone:
"*After me cometh a Builder. Tell him, I too have known.*"

THE PALACE

Swift to my use in my trenches, where my well-planned ground-works grew,
I tumbled his quoins and his ashlars, and cut and reset them anew.
Lime I milled of the marbles; burned it, slacked it, and spread;
Taking and leaving at pleasure the gifts of the humble dead.

Yet I despised not nor gloried; yet, as we wrenched them apart,
I read in the razed foundations the heart of that builder's heart.
As he had risen and pleaded, so did I understand
The form of the dream he had followed in the face of the thing he had planned.

. . . . . .

When I was a King and a Mason—in the open noon of my pride,
They sent me a Word from the Darkness—They whispered and put me aside.
They said—"The end is forbidden." They said—"Thy use is fulfilled,
"And thy palace shall stand as that other's—the spoil of a King who shall build."

THE PALACE

I called my men from my trenches, my quarries, my
wharves, and my shears.
All I had wrought I abandoned to the faith of the
faithless years.
Only I cut on the timber, only I carved on the
stone:
*After me cometh a Builder. Tell him, I too have
known!*

SUSSEX

GOD gave all men all earth to love,
But since our hearts are small,
Ordained for each one spot should prove
Beloved over all;
That as He watched Creation's birth,
So we, in godlike mood,
May of our love create our earth
And see that it is good.

So one shall Baltic pines content,
As one some Surrey glade,
Or one the palm-grove's droned lament
Before Levuka's trade.
Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—
Yea, Sussex by the sea!

SUSSEX

No tender-hearted garden crowns,
  No bosomed woods adorn
Our blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed Downs,
  But gnarled and writhen thorn—
Fair slopes where chasing shadows skim,
  And through the gaps revealed
Belt upon belt, the wooded, dim
  Blue goodness of the Weald.

Clean of officious fence or hedge,
  Half-wild and wholly tame,
The wise turf cloaks the white cliff edge
  As when the Romans came.
What sign of those that fought and died
  At shift of sword and sword?
The barrow and the camp abide,
  The sunlight and the sward.

Here leaps ashore the full Sou'west
  All heavy-winged with brine,
Here lies above the folded crest
  The Channel's leaden line;
And here the sea-fogs lap and cling,
  And here, each warning each,
The sheep-bells and the ship-bells ring
  Along the hidden beach.

SUSSEX

We have no waters to delight
  Our broad and brookless vales—
Only the dewpond on the height
  Unfed, that never fails,
Whereby no tattered herbage tells
  Which way the season flies—
Only our close-bit thyme that smells
  Like dawn in Paradise.

Here through the strong unhampered days
  The tinkling silence thrills;
Or little, lost, Down churches praise
  The Lord who made the hills:
But here the Old Gods guard their round,
  And, in her secret heart,
The heathen kingdom Wilfrid found
  Dreams, as she dwells, apart.

Though all the rest were all my share,
  With equal soul I'd see
Her nine-and-thirty sisters fair,
  Yet none more fair than she.
Choose ye your need from Thames to Tweed,
  And I will choose instead
Such lands as lie 'twixt Rake and Rye,
  Black Down and Beachy Head.

SUSSEX

I will go out against the sun
  Where the rolled scarp retires,
And the Long Man of Wilmington
  Looks naked toward the shires;
And east till doubling Rother crawls
  To find the fickle tide,
By dry and sea-forgotten walls,
  Our ports of stranded pride.

I will go north about the shaws
  And the deep ghylls that breed
Huge oaks and old, the which we hold
  No more than "Sussex weed";
Or south where windy Piddinghoe's
  Begilded dolphin veers,
And black beside wide-bankèd Ouse
  Lie down our Sussex steers.

So to the land our hearts we give
  Till the sure magic strike,
And Memory, Use, and Love make live
  Us and our fields alike—
That deeper than our speech and thought,
  Beyond our reason's sway,
Clay of the pit whence we were wrought
  Yearns to its fellow-clay.

SUSSEX

God gives all men all earth to love,
But since man's heart is small,
Ordains for each one spot shall prove
Beloved over all.
Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—
Yea, Sussex by the sea!

SONG OF THE WISE CHILDREN

WHEN the darkened Fifties dip to the North,
And frost and the fog divide the air,
And the day is dead at his breaking-forth,
Sirs, it is bitter beneath the Bear!

Far to Southward they wheel and glance,
The million molten spears of morn—
The spears of our deliverance
That shine on the house where we were born.

Flying-fish about our bows,
Flying sea-fires in our wake:
This is the road to our Father's House,
Whither we go for our soul's sake!

SONG OF THE WISE CHILDREN

We have forfeited our birthright,
  We have forsaken all things meet;
We have forgotten the look of light,
  We have forgotten the scent of heat.

They that walk with shaded brows,
  Year by year in a shining land,
They be men of our Father's House,
  They shall receive us and understand.

We shall go back by boltless doors,
  To the life unaltered our childhood knew—
To the naked feet on the cool, dark floors,
  And the high-ceiled rooms that the Trade blows
    through:

To the trumpet-flowers and the moon beyond,
  And the tree-toad's chorus drowning all—
And the lisp of the split banana-frond
  That talked us to sleep when we were small.

The wayside magic, the threshold spells,
  Shall soon undo what the North has done—
Because of the sights and the sounds and the smells
  That ran with our youth in the eye of the sun!

SONG OF THE WISE CHILDREN

And Earth accepting shall ask no vows,
  Nor the Sea our love nor our lover the Sky.
When we return to our Father's House
  Only the English shall wonder why!

BUDDHA AT KAMAKURA

"And there is a Japanese idol at Kamakura."

OH ye who tread the Narrow Way
By Tophet-flare to Judgment Day,
Be gentle when the "heathen" pray
To Buddha at Kamakura!

To him the Way, the Law, Apart,
Whom Maya held beneath her heart,
Ananda's Lord the Bodhisat,
The Buddha of Kamakura.

For though he neither burns nor sees,
Nor hears ye thank your Deities,
Ye have not sinned with such as these,
His children at Kamakura;

BUDDHA AT KAMAKURA

Yet spare us still the Western joke
When joss-sticks turn to scented smoke
The little sins of little folk
  That worship at Kamakura—

The grey-robed, gay-sashed butterflies
That flit beneath the Master's eyes—
He is beyond the Mysteries
  But loves them at Kamakura.

And whoso will, from Pride released,
Contemning neither creed nor priest,
May feel the soul of all the East
  About him at Kamakura.

Yea, every tale Ananda heard,
Of birth as fish or beast or bird,
While yet in lives the Master stirred,
  The warm wind brings Kamakura.

Till drowsy eyelids seem to see
A-flower 'neath her golden *htee*
The Shwe-Dagon flare easterly
  From Burmah to Kamakura.

BUDDHA AT KAMAKURA

And down the loaded air there comes
The thunder of Thibetan drums,
And droned—"*Om mane padme oms*"—
A world's width from Kamakura.

Yet Brahmans rule Benares still,
Buddh-Gaya's ruins pit the hill,
And beef-fed zealots threaten ill
To Buddha and Kamakura.

A tourist-show, a legend told,
A rusting bulk of bronze and gold,
So much, and scarce so much, ye hold
The meaning of Kamakura?

But when the morning prayer is prayed,
Think, ere ye pass to strife and trade,
Is God in human image made
No nearer than Kamakura?

THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

TAKE up the White Man's burden—
  Send forth the best ye breed—
Go bind your sons to exile
  To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
  On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
  Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's burden—
  In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror
  And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple,
  An hundred times made plain,
To seek another's profit,
  And work another's gain.

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THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

Take up the White Man's burden—
  The savage wars of peace—
Fill full the mouth of Famine
  And bid the sickness cease.
And when your goal is nearest
  The end for others sought,
Watch Sloth and heathen Folly
  Bring all your hope to naught.

Take up the White Man's burden—
  No tawdry rule of kings,
But toil of serf and sweeper—
  The tale of common things.
The ports ye shall not enter,
  The roads ye shall not tread,
Go make them with your living,
  And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden—
  And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better,
  The hate of those ye guard—
The cry of hosts ye humour
  (Ah, slowly!) toward the light:—
"Why brought ye us from bondage,
  Our loved Egyptian night?"

THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

Take up the White Man's burden—
  Ye dare not stoop to less—
Nor call too loud on Freedom
  To cloak your weariness;
By all ye cry or whisper,
  By all ye leave or do,
The silent, sullen peoples
  Shall weigh your Gods and you.

Take up the White Man's burden—
  Have done with childish days—
The lightly proffered laurel,
  The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood
  Through all the thankless years,
Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,
  The judgment of your peers!

PHARAOH AND THE SERGEANT

" . . . Consider that the meritorious services of the Sergeant Instructors attached to the Egyptian Army have been inadequately acknowledged. . . . To the excellence of their work is mainly due the great improvement that has taken place in the soldiers of H. H. the Khedive."

Extract from letter.

SAID England unto Pharaoh, "I must make a man of you,
That will stand upon his feet and play the game;
That will Maxim his oppressor as a Christian ought to do,"
And she sent old Pharaoh Sergeant Whatisname.
It was not a Duke nor Earl, nor yet a *Vis*count—
It was not a big brass General that came;
But a man in khaki kit who could handle men a bit,
With his bedding labelled Sergeant Whatisname.

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PHARAOH AND THE SERGEANT

Said England unto Pharaoh, "Though at present singing small,
You shall hum a proper tune before it ends,"
And she introduced old Pharaoh to the Sergeant once for all,
And left 'em in the desert making friends.
It was not a Crystal Palace nor Cathedral;
It was not a public-house of common fame;
But a piece of red-hot sand, with a palm on either hand,
And a little hut for Sergeant Whatisname.

Said England unto Pharaoh, "You've had miracles before,
When Aaron struck your rivers into blood;
But if you watch the Sergeant he can show you something more,
He's a charm for making riflemen from mud."
It was neither Hindustani, French, nor Coptics;
It was odds and ends and leavings of the same,
Translated by a stick (which is really half the trick),
And Pharaoh harked to Sergeant Whatisname.

PHARAOH AND THE SERGEANT

(There were years that no one talked of; there were
times of horrid doubt—
There was faith and hope and whacking and
despair—
While the Sergeant gave the Cautions and he combed
old Pharaoh out,
And England didn't seem to know nor care.
That is England's awful way o' doing business—
She would serve her God or Gordon just the
same—
For she thinks her Empire still is the Strand and
Holborn Hill,
And she didn't think of Sergeant Whatis-
name.)

Said England to the Sergeant, "You can let my
people go!"
(England used 'em cheap and nasty from the start),
And they entered 'em in battle on a most astonished
foe—
But the Sergeant he had hardened Pharaoh's
heart.
That was broke, along of all the plagues of
Egypt,
Three thousand years before the Sergeant
came—

PHARAOH AND THE SERGEANT

And he mended it again in a little more than ten,
So Pharaoh fought like Sergeant Whatisname!

It was wicked bad campaigning (cheap and nasty from the first),
There was heat and dust and coolie-work and sun,
There were vipers, flies, and sandstorms, there was cholera and thirst,
But Pharaoh done the best he ever done.
Down the desert, down the railway, down the river,
Like Israelites from bondage so he came,
'Tween the clouds o' dust and fire to the land of his desire,
And his Moses, it was Sergeant Whatisname!

We are eating dirt in handfuls for to save our daily bread,
Which we have to buy from those that hate us most,
And we must not raise the money where the Sergeant raised the dead,
And it's wrong and bad and dangerous to boast.

PHARAOH AND THE SERGEANT

But he did it on the cheap and on the quiet,
And he's not allowed to forward any claim—
Though he drilled a black man white, though he made a mummy fight,
He will still continue Sergeant Whatisname—
Private, Corporal, Colour-Sergeant, and Instructor—
But the everlasting miracle's the same!

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

(CANADIAN PREFERENTIAL TARIFF, 1897)

A NATION spoke to a Nation,
A Queen sent word to a Throne:
"Daughter am I in my mother's house,
But mistress in my own.
The gates are mine to open,
As the gates are mine to close,
And I set my house in order,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

"Neither with laughter nor weeping,
Fear or the child's amaze—
Soberly under the White Man's law
My white men go their ways.
Not for the Gentiles' clamour—
Insult or threat of blows—
Bow we the knee to Baal,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

"My speech is clean and single,
I talk of common things—
Words of the wharf and the market-place
And the ware the merchant brings;
Favour to those I favour,
But a stumbling-block to my foes.
Many there be that hate us,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

"I called my chiefs to council
In the din of a troubled year;
For the sake of a sign ye would not see,
And a word ye would not hear.
This is our message and answer;
This is the path we chose:
For we be also a people,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

"Carry the word to my sisters—
To the Queens of the East and the South.
I have proven faith in the Heritage
By more than the word of the mouth.
They that are wise may follow
Ere the world's war-trumpet blows:
But I—I am first in the battle,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

A Nation spoke to a Nation,
A Throne sent word to a Throne:
" Daughter am I in my mother's house,
But mistress in my own!
The gates are mine to open,
As the gates are mine to close,
And I abide by my mother's house,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

"ET DONA FERENTES"

IN extended observation of the ways and works of man,
From the Four-mile Radius roughly to the plains of Hindustan:
I have drunk with mixed assemblies, seen the racial ruction rise,
And the men of half creation damning half creation's eyes.

I have watched them in their tantrums, all that pentecostal crew,
French, Italian, Arab, Spaniard, Dutch and Greek, and Russ and Jew,
Celt and savage, buff and ochre, cream and yellow, mauve and white,
But it never really mattered till the English grew polite;

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"ET DONA FERENTES"

Till the men with polished toppers, till the men in
long frock-coats,
Till the men that do not duel, till the men who fight
with votes,
Till the breed that take their pleasures as Saint
Laurence took his grid,
Began to "beg your pardon" and—the knowing
croupier hid.

Then the bandsmen with their fiddles, and the girls
that bring the beer,
Felt the psychologic moment, left the lit casino clear;
But the uninstructed alien, from the Teuton to the
Gaul,
Was entrapped, once more, my country, by that
suave, deceptive drawl.

. . . . . .

As it was in ancient Suez or 'neath wilder, milder
skies,
I "observe with apprehension" when the racial ruc-
tions rise;
And with keener apprehension, if I read the times
aright,
Hear the old casino order: "Watch your man, but
be polite.

"ET DONA FERENTES"

"Keep your temper. Never answer (*that* was why
they spat and swore).
Don't hit first, but move together (there's no hurry)
to the door.
Back to back, and facing outward while the linguist
tells 'em how—
*'Nous sommes allong à notre batteau, nous ne voulons
pas un row.'*"

So the hard, pent rage ate inward, till some idiot
went too far . . .
"Let 'em have it!" and they had it, and the same
was serious war.
Fist, umbrella, cane, decanter, lamp and beer-mug,
chair and boot—
Till behind the fleeing legions rose the long, hoarse
yell for loot.

Then the oil-cloth with its numbers, as a banner
fluttered free;
Then the grand piano cantered, on three castors,
down the quay;
White, and breathing through their nostrils, silent,
systematic, swift—
They removed, effaced, abolished all that man could
heave or lift.

"ET DONA FERENTES"

Oh, my country, bless the training that from cot to
castle runs—
The pitfall of the stranger but the bulwark of thy
sons—
Measured speech and ordered action, sluggish soul
and unperturbed,
Till we wake our Island-Devil—nowise cool for being
curbed!

When the heir of all the ages "has the honour to
remain,"
When he will not hear an insult, though men make
it ne'er so plain,
When his lips are schooled to meekness, when his
back is bowed to blows—
Well the keen *aas-vogels* know it—well the waiting
jackal knows.

Build on the flanks of Etna where the sullen smoke-
puffs float—
Or bathe in tropic waters where the lean fin dogs the
boat—
Cock the gun that is not loaded, cook the frozen
dynamite—
But oh, beware my country, when my country grows
polite!

KITCHENER'S SCHOOL

Being a translation of the song that was made by a Mohammedan schoolmaster of Bengal Infantry (some time on service at Suakim) when he heard that the Sirdar was taking money from the English to build a Madrissa for Hubshees—or a college for the Sudanese, 1898.

OH Hubshee, carry your shoes in your hand and
bow your head on your breast!
This is the message of Kitchener who did not break
you in jest.
It was permitted to him to fulfil the long-appointed
years,
Reaching the end ordained of old over your dead
Emirs.

He stamped only before your walls, and the Tomb
ye knew was dust:
He gathered up under his armpits all the swords of
your trust:

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KITCHENER'S SCHOOL

He set a guard on your granaries, securing the weak
from the strong:
He said:—"Go work the water-wheels that were
abolished so long."

He said:—"Go safely, being abased. I have
accomplished my vow."
That was the mercy of Kitchener. Cometh his
madness now!
He does not desire as ye desire, nor devise as ye
devise:
He is preparing a second host—an army to make you
wise.

Not at the mouth of his clean-lipped guns shall ye
learn his name again,
But letter by letter, from Kaf to Kaf, at the mouth
of his chosen men.
He has gone back to his own city, not seeking
presents or bribes,
But openly asking the English for money to buy you
Hakims and scribes.

Knowing that ye are forfeit by battle and have no
right to live,
He begs for money to bring you learning—and all
the English give.

KITCHENER'S SCHOOL

It is their treasure—it is their pleasure—thus are their hearts inclined:
For Allah created the English mad—the maddest of all mankind!

They do not consider the Meaning of Things; they consult not creed nor clan.
Behold, they clap the slave on the back, and behold, he ariseth a man!
They terribly carpet the earth with dead, and before their cannon cool,
They walk unarmed by twos and threes to call the living to school.

How is this reason (which is their reason) to judge a scholar's worth,
By casting a ball at three straight sticks and defending the same with a fourth?
But this they do (which is doubtless a spell) and other matters more strange,
Until, by the operation of years, the hearts of their scholars change:

Till these make come and go great boats or engines upon the rail
(But always the English watch near by to prop them when they fail);

Till these make laws of their own choice and Judges
of their own blood;
And all the mad English obey the Judges and say
that the Law is good.

Certainly they were mad from of old: but I think
one new thing,
That the magic whereby they work their magic—
wherefrom their fortunes spring—
May be that they show all peoples their magic and
ask no price in return.
Wherefore, since ye are bond to that magic, oh
Hubshee, make haste and learn!

Certainly also is Kitchener mad. But one sure thing
I know—
If he who broke you be minded to teach you, to his
Madrissa go!
Go, and carry your shoes in your hand and bow
your head on your breast,
For he who did not slay you in sport, he will not
teach you in jest.

THE YOUNG QUEEN

(THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA, INAUGURATED NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1901)

HER hand was still on her sword-hilt, the spur was still on her heel,
She had not cast her harness of grey war-dinted steel;
High on her red-splashed charger, beautiful, bold, and browned,
Bright-eyed out of the battle, the Young Queen rode to be crowned.

She came to the Old Queen's presence, in the Hall of Our Thousand Years—
In the Hall of the Five Free Nations that are peers among their peers:

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THE YOUNG QUEEN

Royal she gave the greeting, loyal she bowed the head,
Crying:—"Crown me, my Mother!" And the Old Queen stood and said:—

"How can I crown thee further? I know whose standard flies
Where the clean surge takes the Leeuwin or the coral barriers rise.
Blood of our foes on thy bridle, and speech of our friends in thy mouth—
How can I crown thee further, O Queen of the Sovereign South?

"Let the Five Free Nations witness!" But the Young Queen answered swift:—
"It shall be crown of Our crowning to hold Our crown for a gift.
In the days when Our folk were feeble thy sword made sure Our lands:
Wherefore We come in power to take Our crown at thy hands."

And the Old Queen raised and kissed her, and the jealous circlet prest,
Roped with the pearls of the Northland and red with the gold of the West,

THE YOUNG QUEEN

Lit with her land's own opals, levin-hearted, alive,
And the five-starred cross above them, for sign of
the Nations Five.

So it was done in the Presence—in the Hall of Our
Thousand Years,
In the face of the Five Free Nations that have no
peer but their peers;
And the Young Queen out of the Southland kneeled
down at the Old Queen's knee,
And asked for a mother's blessing on the excellent
years to be.

And the Old Queen stooped in the stillness where
the jewelled head drooped low:—
"Daughter no more but Sister, and doubly Daughter
so—
Mother of many princes—and child of the child I
bore,
What good thing shall I wish thee that I have not
wished before?

"Shall I give thee delight in dominion—mere pride
of thy setting forth?
Nay, we be women together—we know what that
lust is worth.

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THE YOUNG QUEEN

Peace in thy utmost borders, and strength on a road untrod?
These are dealt or diminished at the secret will of God.

"I have swayed troublous councils, I am wise in terrible things;
Father and son and grandson, I have known the heart of the Kings.
Shall I give thee my sleepless wisdom, or the gift all wisdom above?
Ay, we be women together—I give thee thy people's love:

"Tempered, august, abiding, reluctant of prayers or vows,
Eager in face of peril as thine for thy mother's house.
God requite thee, my Sister, through the wonderful years to be,
And make thy people to love thee as thou hast loved me!"

RIMMON

DULY with knees that feign to quake—
  Bent head and shaded brow,—
Yet once again, for my father's sake,
  In Rimmon's House I bow.

The curtains part, and the trumpet blares,
  And the eunuchs howl aloud;
And the gilt, swag-bellied idol glares
  Insolent over the crowd.

" *This is Rimmon, Lord of the Earth—*
  " *Fear Him and bow the knee!* "
And I watch my comrades hide their mirth
  That rode to the wars with me.

For we remember the sun and the sand
  And the rocks whereon we trod,
Ere we came to a scorched and a scornful land
  That did not know our God;

RIMMON

As we remember the sacrifice
  Dead men an hundred laid—
Slain while they served His mysteries
  And that He would not aid.

Not though we gashed ourselves and wept,
  For the high-priest bade us wait;
Saying He went on a journey or slept,
  Or was drunk or had taken a mate.

(Praise ye Rimmon, King of Kings,
  Who ruleth Earth and Sky!
And again I bow as the censer swings
  And the God Enthroned goes by.)

Ay, we remember His sacred ark
  And the virtuous men that knelt
To the dark and the hush behind the dark
  Wherein we dreamed He dwelt;

Until we entered to hale Him out,
  And found no more than an old
Uncleanly image girded about
  The loins with scarlet and gold.

RIMMON

Him we o'erset with the butts of our spears—
  Him and His vast designs—
To be the scorn of our muleteers
  And the jest of our halted lines.

By the picket-pins that the dogs defile,
  In the dung and the dust He lay,
Till the priests ran and chattered awhile
  And wiped Him and took Him away.

Hushing the matter before it was known,
  They returned to our fathers afar,
And hastily set Him afresh on His throne
  Because He had won us the war.

Wherefore with knees that feign to quake—
  Bent head and shaded brow—
To this great dog, for my father's sake,
  In Rimmon's House I bow.

THE OLD ISSUE

(October 9, 1899)

"Here is nothing new nor aught unproven," say the Trumpets,
"Many feet have worn it and the road is old indeed.
"It is the King—the King we schooled aforetime!"
(Trumpets in the marshes—in the eyot at Runnymede!)

"Here is neither haste, nor hate, nor anger," peal the Trumpets,
"Pardon for his penitence or pity for his fall.
"It is the King!"—inexorable Trumpets—
(Trumpets round the scaffold at the dawning by Whitehall!)

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THE OLD ISSUE

" He hath veiled the crown and hid the sceptre," warn the Trumpets,
" He hath changed the fashion of the lies that cloak his will.
" Hard die the Kings—ah hard—dooms hard! "
declare the Trumpets,
Trumpets at the gang-plank where the brawling troop-decks fill!

Ancient and Unteachable, abide—abide the Trumpets!
Once again the Trumpets, for the shuddering ground-swell brings
Clamour over ocean of the harsh pursuing Trumpets—
Trumpets of the Vanguard that have sworn no truce with Kings!

All we have of freedom, all we use or know—
This our fathers bought for us long and long ago.

Ancient Right unnoticed as the breath we draw—
Leave to live by no man's leave, underneath the Law.

Lance and torch and tumult, steel and grey-goose wing
Wrenched it, inch and ell and all, slowly from the King.

THE OLD ISSUE

Till our fathers 'stablished, after bloody years,
How our King is one with us, first among his peers.

So they bought us freedom—not at little cost—
Wherefore must we watch the King, lest our gain be lost.

Over all things certain, this is sure indeed,
Suffer not the old King: for we know the breed.

Give no ear to bondsmen bidding us endure,
Whining "He is weak and far"; crying "Time shall cure."

(Time himself is witness, till the battle joins,
Deeper strikes the rottenness in the people's loins.)

Give no heed to bondsmen masking war with peace.
Suffer not the old King here or overseas!

They that beg us barter—wait his yielding mood—
Pledge the years we hold in trust—pawn our brother's blood—

Howso' great their clamour, whatsoe'er their claim,
Suffer not the old King under any name!

Here is naught unproven—here is naught to learn.
It is written what shall fall if the King return.

THE OLD ISSUE

He shall mark our goings, question whence we came,
Set his guards about us, as in Freedom's name.

He shall take a tribute, toll of all our ware;
He shall change our gold for arms—arms we may
not bear.

He shall break his Judges if they cross his word;
He shall rule above the Law calling on the Lord.

He shall peep and mutter; and the night shall bring
Watchers 'neath our window, lest we mock the
King—

Hate and all division; hosts of hurrying spies;
Money poured in secret, carrion breeding flies.

Strangers of his council, hirelings of his pay,
These shall deal our Justice: sell—deny—delay.

We shall drink dishonour, we shall eat abuse
For the Land we look to—for the Tongue we use.

We shall take our station, dirt beneath his feet,
While his hired captains jeer us in the street.

Cruel in the shadow, crafty in the sun,
Far beyond his borders shall his teachings run.

THE OLD ISSUE

Sloven, sullen, savage, secret, uncontrolled—
Laying on a new land evil of the old;

Long-forgotten bondage, dwarfing heart and brain—
All our fathers died to loose he shall bind again.

Here is naught at venture, random nor untrue—
Swings the wheel full-circle, brims the cup anew.

Here is naught unproven, here is nothing hid:
Step for step and word for word—so the old Kings did!

Step by step and word by word: who is ruled may read.
Suffer not the old Kings—for we know the breed—

All the right they promise—all the wrong they bring.
Stewards of the Judgment, suffer not this King!

BRIDGE-GUARD IN THE KARROO

"and will supply details to guard the Blood River Bridge."
District Orders—Lines of Communication.

SUDDEN the desert changes,
The raw glare softens and clings,
Till the aching Oudtshoorn ranges
Stand up like the thrones of kings—

Ramparts of slaughter and peril—
Blazing, amazing—aglow
'Twixt the skyline's belting beryl
And the wine-dark flats below.

Royal the pageant closes,
Lit by the last of the sun—
Opal and ash-of-roses,
Cinnamon, umber, and dun.

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BRIDGE-GUARD IN THE KARROO

The twilight swallows the thicket,
  The starlight reveals the ridge;
The whistle shrills to the picket
  We are changing guard on the bridge.

(Few, forgotten and lonely,
  Where the empty metals shine—
No, not combatants—only
  Details guarding the line.)

We slip through the broken panel
  Of fence by the ganger's shed;
We drop to the waterless channel
  And the lean track overhead;

We stumble on refuse of rations,
  The beef and the biscuit-tins;
We take our appointed stations,
  And the endless night begins.

We hear the Hottentot herders
  As the sheep click past to the fold—
And the click of the restless girders
  As the steel contracts in the cold—

BRIDGE-GUARD IN THE KARROO

Voices of jackals calling
And, loud in the hush between,
A morsel of dry earth falling
From the flanks of the scarred ravine.

And the solemn firmament marches,
And the hosts of heaven rise
Framed through the iron arches—
Banded and barred by the ties,

Till we feel the far track humming,
And we see her headlight plain,
And we gather and wait her coming—
The wonderful north-bound train.

(Few, forgotten and lonely,
Where the white car-windows shine—
No, not combatants—only
Details guarding the line.)

Quick, ere the gift escape us!
Out of the darkness we reach
For a handful of week-old papers
And a mouthful of human speech.

BRIDGE-GUARD IN THE KARROO

And the monstrous heaven rejoices,
  And the earth allows again
Meetings, greetings, and voices
  Of women talking with men.

So we return to our places,
  As out on the bridge she rolls;
And the darkness covers our faces,
  And the darkness re-enters our souls.

More than a little lonely
  Where the lessening tail-lights shine.
No—not combatants—only
  Details guarding the line!

THE LESSON

(1899–1902)

Let us admit it fairly, as a business people should,
We have had no end of a lesson: it will do us no end of good.

Not on a single issue, or in one direction or twain,
But conclusively, comprehensively, and several times and again,
Were all our most holy illusions knocked higher than Gilderoy's kite.
We have had a jolly good lesson, and it serves us jolly well right!

This was not bestowed us under the trees, nor yet in the shade of a tent,
But swingingly, over eleven degrees of a bare brown continent.

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THE LESSON

From Lamberts to Delagoa Bay, and from Pietersburg to Sutherland,
Fell the phenomenal lesson we learned—with a fullness accorded no other land.

It was our fault, and our very great fault, and *not* the judgment of Heaven.
We made an Army in our own image, on an island nine by seven,
Which faithfully mirrored its makers' ideals, equipment, and mental attitude—
And so we got our lesson: and we ought to accept it with gratitude.

We have spent two hundred million pounds to prove the fact once more,
That horses are quicker than men afoot, since two and two make four:
And horses have four legs, and men have two legs, and two into four goes twice,
And nothing over except our lesson—and very cheap at the price.

For remember (this our children shall know: we are too near for that knowledge)
Not our mere astonied camps, but Council and Creed and College—

THE LESSON

All the obese, unchallenged old things that stifle and
overlie us—
Have felt the effects of the lesson we got—an
advantage no money could buy us!

Then let us develop this marvellous asset which we
alone command,
And which, it may subsequently transpire, will be
worth as much as the Rand:
Let us approach this pivotal fact in a humble yet
hopeful mood—
We have had no end of a lesson: it will do us no
end of good!

It was our fault, and our very great fault—and now
we must turn it to use;
We have forty million reasons for failure, but not a
single excuse!
So the more we work and the less we talk the better
results we shall get—
We have had an Imperial lesson; it may make us an
Empire yet!

THE FILES

(THE SUB-EDITOR SPEAKS)

FILES—
The Files—
Office Files!
Oblige me by referring to the files.
Every question man can raise,
Every phrase of every phase
Of that question is on record in the files—
(Threshed out threadbare—fought and finished in the files).
Ere the Universe at large
Was our new-tipped arrows' targe—
Ere we rediscovered Mammon and his wiles—
Faenza, gentle reader, spent her—five-and-twentieth leader
(You will find him, and some others, in the files).
Warn all future Robert Brownings and Carlyles,
It will interest them to hunt among the files,

THE FILES

Where unvisited, a-cold,
Lie the crowded years of old
In that Kensal-Green of greatness called the files—
(In our newspaPère-la-Chaise the office files),
Where the dead men lay them down
Meekly sure of long renown,
And above them, sere and swift,
Packs the daily deepening drift
Of the all-recording, all-effacing files—
The obliterating, automatic files.
Count the mighty men who slung
Ink, Evangel, Sword, or Tongue
When Reform and you were young—
Made their boasts and spake according in the files—
(Hear the ghosts that wake applauding in the files!)
Trace each all-forgot career
From long primer through brevier
Unto Death, a para minion in the files
(Para minion—solid—bottom of the files) . . . .
Some successful Kings and Queens adorn the files,
They were great, their views were leaded,
And their deaths were triple-headed,
So they catch the eye in running through the files
(Show as blazes in the mazes of the files);
For their "paramours and priests,"
And their gross, jack-booted feasts,
And their epoch-marking actions see the files.

THE FILES

Was it Bomba fled the blue Sicilian isles?
Was it Saffi a professor
Once of Oxford, wrought redress or
Garibaldi?—Who remembers
Forty-odd-year old Septembers?—
Only sextons paid to dig among the files
(Such as I am, born and bred among the files).
You must hack through much deposit
Ere you know for sure who was it
Came to burial with such honour in the files
(Only seven seasons back beneath the files).
"Very great our loss and grievous—
"So our best and brightest leave us,
"And it ends the Age of Giants," say the files;
All the '60—'70—'80—'90 files
(The open-minded, opportunist files—
The easy "O King, live for ever" files).
It is good to read a little in the files;
'Tis a sure and sovereign balm
Unto philosophic calm,
Yea, and philosophic doubt when Life beguiles.
When you know Success is Greatness,
When you marvel at your lateness
In apprehending facts so plain to Smiles
(Self-helpful, wholly strenuous Samuel Smiles),
When your Imp of Blind Desire
Bids you set the Thames afire,

THE FILES

You'll remember men have done so—in the files.
You'll have seen those flames transpire—in the files
(More than once that flood has run so—in the files).
When the Conchimarian horns
Of the reboantic Norns
Usher gentlemen and ladies
With new lights on Heaven and Hades,
Guaranteeing to Eternity
All yesterday's modernity;
When Brocken-spectres made by
Some one's breath on ink parade by,
Very earnest and tremendous,
Let not shows of shows offend us.
When of everything we like we
Shout ecstatic:—"*Quod ubique,*
Quod ab omnibus means *semper!*"
Oh, my brother, keep your temper!
Light your pipe and take a look along the files!
You've a better chance to guess
At the meaning of Success
(Which is Greatness—*vide* press)
When you've seen it in perspective in the files.

THE REFORMER

Not in the camp his victory lies
Or triumph in the market-place,
Who is his Nation's sacrifice
To turn the judgment from his race.

Happy is he who, bred and taught
By sleek, sufficing Circumstance—
Whose Gospel was the apparelled thought,
Whose Gods were Luxury and Chance—

Sees, on the threshold of his days,
The old life shrivel like a scroll,
And to unheralded dismays
Submits his body and his soul;

The fatted shows wherein he stood
Foregoing, and the idiot pride,
That he may prove with his own blood
All that his easy sires denied—

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THE REFORMER

Ultimate issues, primal springs,
  Demands, abasements, penalties—
The imperishable plinth of things
  Seen and unseen, that touch our peace.

For, though ensnaring ritual dim
  His vision through the after-years,
Yet virtue shall go out of him:
  Example profiting his peers.

With great things charged he shall not hold
  Aloof till great occasion rise,
But serve, full-harnessed, as of old
  The days that are the destinies.

He shall forswear and put away
  The idols of his sheltered house;
And to Necessity shall pay
  Unflinching tribute of his vows.

He shall not plead another's act,
  Nor bind him in another's oath
To weigh the Word above the Fact,
  Or make or take excuse for sloth.

THE REFORMER

The yoke he bore shall press him still,
  And long-ingrained effort goad
To find, to fashion, and fulfil
  The cleaner life, the sterner code.

Not in the camp his victory lies—
  The world (unheeding his return)
Shall see it in his children's eyes
  And from his grandson's lips shall learn!

DIRGE OF DEAD SISTERS

WHO recalls the twilight and the ranged tents in order
(Violet peaks uplifted through the crystal evening air?)
And the clink of iron teacups and the piteous, noble laughter,
And the faces of the Sisters with the dust upon their hair?

(Now and not hereafter, while the breath is in our nostrils,
Now and not hereafter, ere the meaner years go by—
Let us now remember many honourable women,
Such as bade us turn again when we were like to die.)

Who recalls the morning and the thunder through the foothills,
(Tufts of fleecy shrapnel strung along the empty plains?)

DIRGE OF DEAD SISTERS

And the sun-scarred Red-Cross coaches creeping
guarded to the culvert,
And the faces of the Sisters looking gravely from
the trains?

(When the days were torment and the nights were
clouded terror,
When the Powers of Darkness had dominion on
our souls—
When we fled consuming through the Seven Hells of
fever,
These put out their hands to us and healed and
made us whole.)

Who recalls the midnight by the bridge's wrecked
abutment
(Autumn rain that rattled like a Maxim on the
tin?)
And the lightning-dazzled levels and the streaming,
straining wagons,
And the faces of the Sisters as they bore the
wounded in?

(Till the pain was merciful and stunned us into
silence—
When each nerve cried out on God that made the
misused clay;

DIRGE OF DEAD SISTERS

When the Body triumphed and the last poor shame
departed—
These abode our agonies and wiped the sweat
away.)

Who recalls the noontide and the funerals through
the market
(Blanket-hidden bodies, flagless, followed by the
flies?)
And the footsore firing-party, and the dust and
stench and staleness,
And the faces of the Sisters and the glory in their
eyes?

(Bold behind the battle, in the open camp
all-hallowed,
Patient, wise, and mirthful in the ringed and
reeking town,
These endured unresting till they rested from their
labours—
Little wasted bodies, ah, so light to lower down!)

Yet their graves are scattered and their names are
clean forgotten,
Earth shall not remember, but the Waiting Angel
knows

DIRGE OF DEAD SISTERS

Them that died at Uitvlugt when the plague was on the city—
Her that fell at Simon's Town in service on our foes.

Wherefore we they ransomed, while the breath is in our nostrils,
Now and not hereafter, ere the meaner years go by—
Praise with love and worship many honourable women,
Those that gave their lives for us when we were like to die!

THE ISLANDERS

No doubt but ye are the People—your throne is above
the King's.
Whoso speaks in your presence must say acceptable
things:
Bowing the head in worship, bending the knee in
fear—
Bringing the word well smoothen—such as a King
should hear.

Fenced by your careful fathers, ringed by your
leaden seas,
Long did ye wake in quiet and long lie down at
ease;
Till ye said of Strife, "What is it?" of the Sword,
"It is far from our ken";
Till ye made a sport of your shrunken hosts and a
toy of your armed men.

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THE ISLANDERS

Ye stopped your ears to the warning—ye would
neither look nor heed—
Ye set your leisure before their toil and your lusts
above their need.
Because of your witless learning and your beasts of
warren and chase,
Ye grudged your sons to their service and your fields
for their camping-place.
Ye forced them glean in the highways the straw for
the bricks they brought;
Ye forced them follow in byways the craft that ye
never taught.
Ye hindered and hampered and crippled; ye thrust
out of sight and away
Those that would serve you for honour and those
that served you for pay.
Then were the judgments loosened; then was your
shame revealed,
At the hands of a little people, few but apt in the field.
Yet ye were saved by a remnant (and your land's
long-suffering Star),
When your strong men cheered in their millions
while your striplings went to the war.
Sons of the sheltered city—unmade, unhandled,
unmeet—
Ye pushed them raw to the battle as ye picked them
raw from the street.

THE ISLANDERS

And what did ye look they should compass? War-craft learned in a breath,
Knowledge unto occasion at the first far view of Death?
So! And ye train your horses and the dogs ye feed and prize?
How are the beasts more worthy than the souls your sacrifice?
But ye said, "Their valour shall show them"; but ye said, "The end is close."
And ye sent them comfits and pictures to help them harry your foes,
And ye vaunted your fathomless power, and ye flaunted your iron pride,
Ere—ye fawned on the Younger Nations for the men who could shoot and ride!
Then ye returned to your trinkets; then ye contented your souls
With the flannelled fools at the wicket or the muddied oafs at the goals.
Given to strong delusion, wholly believing a lie,
Ye saw that the land lay fenceless, and ye let the months go by
Waiting some easy wonder: hoping some saving sign—
Idle—openly idle—in the lee of the forespent Line.

THE ISLANDERS

Idle—except for your boasting—and what is your
boasting worth
If ye grudge a year of service to the lordliest life on
earth?
Ancient, effortless, ordered, cycle on cycle set,
Life so long untroubled, that ye who inherit forget
It was not made with the mountains, it is not one
with the deep.
Men, not gods, devised it. Men, not gods, must
keep.
Men, not children, servants or kinsfolk called from afar,
But each man born in the Island broke to the matter
of war.
Soberly and by custom taken and trained for the
same;
Each man born in the Island entered at youth to the
game—
As it were almost cricket, not to be mastered in haste,
But after trial and labour, by temperance, living
chaste.
As it were almost cricket—as it were even your play,
Weighed and pondered and worshipped, and
practised day and day.
So ye shall bide sure-guarded when the restless
lightnings wake
In the womb of the blotting war-cloud, and the
pallid nations quake.

So, at the haggard trumpets, instant your soul shall leap
Forthright, accoutred, accepting—alert from the wells of sleep.
So at the threat ye shall summon—so at the need ye shall send
Men, not children or servants, tempered and taught to the end;
Cleansed of servile panic, slow to dread or despise,
Humble because of knowledge, mighty by sacrifice.
But ye say, "It will mar our comfort." Ye say, "It will minish our trade."
Do ye wait for the spattered shrapnel ere ye learn how a gun is laid?
For the low, red glare to southward when the raided coast-towns burn?
(Light ye shall have on that lesson, but little time to learn.)
Will ye pitch some white pavilion, and lustily even the odds,
With nets and hoops and mallets, with rackets and bats and rods?
Will the rabbit war with your foemen—the red deer horn them for hire?
Your kept cock-pheasant keep you?—he is master of many a shire.

THE ISLANDERS

Arid, aloof, incurious, unthinking, unthanking, gelt,
Will ye loose your schools to flout them till their browbeat columns melt?
Will ye pray them or preach them, or print them, or ballot them back from your shore?
Will your workmen issue a mandate to bid them strike no more?
Will ye rise and dethrone your rulers? (Because ye were idle both?
Pride by insolence chastened? Indolence purged by sloth?)
No doubt but ye are the People; who shall make you afraid?
Also your gods are many; no doubt but your gods shall aid.
Idols of greasy altars built for the body's ease;
Proud little brazen Baals and talking fetishes;
Teraphs of sept and party and wise wood-pavement gods—
These shall come down to the battle and snatch you from under the rods?
From the gusty, flickering gun-roll with viewless salvoes rent,
And the pitted hail of the bullets that tell not whence they were sent.

THE ISLANDERS

When ye are ringed as with iron, when ye are
scourged as with whips,
When the meat is yet in your belly, and the boast is
yet on your lips;
When ye go forth at morning and the noon beholds
you broke,
Ere ye lie down at even, your remnant, under the
yoke.

*No doubt but ye are the People—absolute, strong, and
wise;*
*Whatever your heart has desired ye have not withheld
from your eyes.*
*On your own heads, in your own hands, the sin and
the saving lies!*

THE PEACE OF DIVES

THE Word came down to Dives in Torment where
he lay:
"Our World is full of wickedness, My Children maim
and slay,
"And the Saint and Seer and Prophet
"Can make no better of it
"Than to sanctify and prophesy and pray.

"Rise up, rise up, thou Dives, and take again thy
gold,
"And thy women and thy housen as they were to
thee of old.
"It may be grace hath found thee
"In the furnace where We bound thee,
"And that thou shalt bring the peace My Son
foretold."

THE PEACE OF DIVES

Then merrily rose Dives and leaped from out his fire,
And walked abroad with diligence to do the Lord's
desire;
And anon the battle ceased,
And the captives were released,
And Earth had rest from Goshen to Gadire.

The Word came down to Satan that raged and
roared alone,
Mid the shouting of the peoples by the cannon
overthrown
(But the Prophets, Saints, and Seers
Set each other by the ears,
For each would claim the marvel as his own):

"Rise up, rise up, thou Satan, upon the Earth to go,
"And prove the peace of Dives if it be good or no:
"For all that he hath planned
"We deliver to thy hand,
"As thy skill shall serve to break it or bring low."

Then mightily rose Satan, and about the Earth he hied,
And breathed on Kings in idleness and Princes drunk
with pride;
But for all the wrong he breathed
There was never sword unsheathed,
And the fires he lighted flickered out and died.

THE PEACE OF DIVES

Then terribly rose Satan, and he darkened Earth afar,
Till he came on cunning Dives where the money-changers are;
And he saw men pledge their gear
For the gold that buys the spear,
And the helmet and the habergeon of war.

Yea to Dives came the Persian and the Syrian and the Mede—
And their hearts were nothing altered, nor their cunning nor their greed—
And they pledged their flocks and farms
For the king-compelling arms,
And Dives lent according to their need.

Then Satan said to Dives:—"Return again with me,
"Who hast broken His Commandment in the day He set thee free,
"Who grindest for thy greed,
"Man's belly-pinch and need;
"And the blood of Man to filthy usury!"

Then softly answered Dives where the money-changers sit:—
"My refuge is Our Master, O My Master in the Pit;
"But behold all Earth is laid
"In the peace which I have made,
"And behold I wait on thee to trouble it!"

Then angrily turned Satan, and about the Seas he
fled,
To shake the new-sown peoples with insult, doubt,
and dread;
But for all the sleight he used
There was never squadron loosed,
And the brands he flung flew dying and fell dead.

Yet to Dives came Atlantis and the Captains of the
West—
And their hates were nothing weakened nor their
anger nor unrest—
And they pawned their utmost trade
For the dry, decreeing blade;
And Dives lent and took of them their best.

Then Satan said to Dives:—"Declare thou by The
Name,
"The secret of thy subtlety that turneth mine to
shame.
"It is known through all the Hells
"How my peoples mocked my spells,
"And my faithless Kings denied me ere I came."

Then answered cunning Dives:—"Do not gold and
hate abide
"At the heart of every Magic, yea, and senseless
fear beside?

THE PEACE OF DIVES

" With gold and fear and hate
" I have harnessed state to state,
" And with hate and fear and gold their hates are tied.

" For hate men seek a weapon, for fear they seek a shield—
" Keener blades and broader targes than their frantic neighbours wield—
" For gold I arm their hands,
" And for gold I buy their lands,
" And for gold I sell their enemies the yield.

" Their nearest foes may purchase, or their furthest friends may lease,
" One by one from Ancient Accad to the Islands of the Seas.
" And their covenants they make
" For the naked iron's sake,
" But I—I trap them armoured into peace.

" The flocks that Egypt pledged me to Assyria I drave,
" And Pharaoh hath the increase of the herds that Sargon gave.
" Not for Ashdod overthrown
" Will the Kings destroy their own,
" Or their peoples wake the strife they feign to brave.

THE PEACE OF DIVES

"Is not Calno like Carchemish? For the steeds of
their desire
"They have sold me seven harvests that I sell to
Crowning Tyre;
"And the Tyrian sweeps the plains
"With a thousand hired wains,
"And the Cities keep the peace and—share the hire.

"Hast thou seen the pride of Moab? For the
swords about his path,
"His bond is to Philistia, in half of all he hath;
"And he dare not draw the sword
"Till Gaza give the word,
"And he show release from Askalon and Gath.

"Wilt thou call again thy peoples, wilt thou craze
anew thy Kings?
"Lo! my lightnings pass before thee, and their
whistling servant brings,
"Ere the drowsy street hath stirred—
"Every masked and midnight word,
"And the nations break their fast upon these things.

"So I make a jest of Wonder, and a mock of Time
and Space,
"The roofless Seas an hostel, and the Earth a market-
place,

THE PEACE OF DIVES

" Where the anxious traders know
" Each is surety for his foe,
" And none may thrive without his fellows' grace.

" Now this is all my subtlety and this is all my wit,
" God give thee good enlightenment, My Master in the Pit.
" But behold all Earth is laid
" In the peace which I have made,
" And behold I wait on thee to trouble it!"

SOUTH AFRICA

LIVED a woman wonderful,
(May the Lord amend her!)
Neither simple, kind, nor true,
But her Pagan beauty drew
Christian gentlemen a few
Hotly to attend her.

Christian gentlemen a few
From Berwick unto Dover;
For she was South Africa,
And she was South Africa,
She was our South Africa,
Africa all over!

Half her land was dead with drouth,
Half was red with battle;
She was fenced with fire and sword,
Plague on pestilence outpoured,
Locusts on the greening sward
And murrain on the cattle!

SOUTH AFRICA

True, ah true, and overtrue;
That is why we love her!
For she is South Africa,
And she is South Africa,
She is our South Africa,
Africa all over!

Bitter hard her lovers toiled,
Scandalous their payment,—
Food forgot on trains derailed;
Cattle-dung where fuel failed;
Water where the mules had staled;
And sackcloth for their raiment!

So she filled their mouths with dust
And their bones with fever;
Greeted them with cruel lies;
Treated them despiteful-wise;
Meted them calamities
Till they vowed to leave her.

They took ship and they took sail,
Raging, from her borders,—
In a little, none the less,
They forgat their sore duresse,
They forgave her waywardness
And returned for orders!

SOUTH AFRICA

They esteemed her favour more
  Than a Throne's foundation.
For the glory of her face
Bade farewell to breed and race—
Yea, and made their burial-place
  Altar of a Nation!

Wherefore, being bought by blood
  And by blood restorèd
To the arms that nearly lost,
She, because of all she cost,
Stands, a very woman, most
  Perfect and adorèd!

On your feet, and let them know
  This is why we love her!
For she is South Africa,
She is our South Africa,
Is our own South Africa,
  Africa all over!

THE SETTLER

HERE, where my fresh-turned furrows run,
And the deep soil glistens red,
I will repair the wrong that was done
To the living and the dead.
Here, where the senseless bullet fell,
And the barren shrapnel burst,
I will plant a tree, I will dig a well,
Against the heat and the thirst.

Here, in a large and a sunlit land,
Where no wrong bites to the bone,
I will lay my hand in my neighbour's hand,
And together we will atone
For the set folly and the red breach
And the black waste of it all,
Giving and taking counsel each
Over the cattle-kraal.

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THE SETTLER

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

THE SETTLER

Here will we join against our foes—
  The hailstroke and the storm,
And the red and rustling cloud that blows
  The locust's mile-deep swarm;
Frost and murrain and floods let loose
  Shall launch us side by side
In the holy wars that have no truce
  'Twixt seed and harvest-tide.

Earth, where we rode to slay or be slain,
  Our love shall redeem unto life;
We will gather and lead to her lips again
  The waters of ancient strife,
From the far and fiercely guarded streams
  And the pools where we lay in wait,
Till the corn cover our evil dreams
  And the young corn our hate.

And when we bring old fights to mind,
  We will not remember the sin—
If there be blood on his head of my kind
  Or blood on my head of his kin—
For the ungrazed upland, the untilled lea
  Cry, and the fields forlorn:
"The dead must bury their dead, but ye—
  Ye serve an host unborn."

THE SETTLER

Bless then, our God, the new-yoked plough
And the good beasts that draw,
And the bread we eat in the sweat of our brow
According to Thy Law.
After us cometh a multitude—
Prosper the work of our hands,
That we may feed with our land's food
The folk of all our lands!

Here, in the waves and the troughs of the plains,
Where the healing stillness lies,
And the vast, benignant sky restrains
And the long days make wise—
Bless to our use the rain and the sun
And the blind seed in its bed,
That we may repair the wrong that was done
To the living and the dead!

SERVICE SONGS

"Tommy" you was when it began,
But now that it is o'er
You shall be called The Service Man
'Enceforward, evermore.

Batt'ry, brigade, flank, centre, van,
Defaulter, Army corps—
From first to last The Service Man
'Enceforward, evermore.

From 'Alifax to 'Industan,
From York to Singapore—
'Orse, foot, an' guns, The Service Man
'Enceforward, evermore!

CHANT—PAGAN

ENGLISH IRREGULAR: '99–'02

ME that 'ave been what I've been,
Me that 'ave gone where I've gone,
Me that 'ave seen what I've seen—
  'Ow can I ever take on
With awful old England again,
An' 'ouses both sides of the street,
And 'edges two sides of the lane,
And the parson an' "gentry" between,
An' touchin' my 'at when we meet—
  Me that 'ave been what I've been?

Me that 'ave watched 'arf a world
'Eave up all shiny with dew,
Kopje on kop to the sun,
An' as soon as the mist let 'em through

CHANT—PAGAN

Our 'elios winkin' like fun—
Three sides of a ninety-mile square,
Over valleys as big as a shire—
Are ye there? Are ye there? Are ye there?
An' then the blind drum of our fire . . .
An' I'm rollin' 'is lawns for the Squire,
Me!

Me that 'ave rode through the dark
Forty mile often on end,
Along the Ma'ollisberg Range,
With only the stars for my mark
An' only the night for my friend,
An' things runnin' off as you pass,
An' things jumpin' up in the grass,
An' the silence, the shine an' the size
Of the 'igh, inexpressible skies. . . .
I am takin' some letters almost
As much as a mile, to the post,
An' "mind you come back with the change!"
Me!

Me that saw Barberton took
When we dropped through the clouds on their 'ead,
An' they 'ove the guns over an' fled—
Me that was through Di'mond 'Ill,
An' Pieters an' Springs an' Belfast—

CHANT—PAGAN

From Dundee to Vereeniging all!
Me that stuck out to the last
(An' five bloomin' bars on my chest)—
I am doin' my Sunday-school best,
By the 'elp of the Squire an' 'is wife
(Not to mention the 'ousemaid an' cook),
To come in an' 'ands up an' be still,
An' honestly work for my bread,
My livin' in that state of life
To which it shall please God to call

Me!

Me that 'ave followed my trade
In the place where the lightnin's are made,
'Twixt the Rains and the Sun and the Moon;
Me that lay down an' got up
Three years an' the sky for my roof—
That 'ave ridden my 'unger an' thirst
Six thousand raw mile on the 'oof,
With the Vaal and the Orange for cup,
An' the Brandwater Basin for dish,—
Oh! it's 'ard to be'ave as they wish
(Too 'ard, an' a little too soon),
I'll 'ave to think over it first—

Me!

I will arise an' get 'ence;—
I will trek South and make sure

CHANT—PAGAN

If it's only my fancy or not
That the sunshine of England is pale,
And the breezes of England are stale,
An' there's somethin' gone small with the lot;
For *I* know of a sun an' a wind,
An' some plains and a mountain be'ind,
An' some graves by a barb-wire fence;
An' a Dutchman I've fought 'oo might give
Me a job were I ever inclined,
To look in an' offsaddle an' live
Where there's neither a road nor a tree—
But only my Maker an' me,
And I think it will kill me or cure,
So I think I will go there an' see.

M. I.

(MOUNTED INFANTRY OF THE LINE)

I WISH my mother could see me now, with a
fence-post under my arm,
And a knife and a spoon in my putties that I found
on a Boer farm,
Atop of a sore-backed Argentine, with a thirst that
you couldn't buy.
I used to be in the Yorkshires once
(Sussex, Lincolns, and Rifles once),
Hampshires, Glosters, and Scottish once! *(ad lib.)*
But now I am M. I.

That is what we are known as—that is the name you
must call
If you want officers' servants, pickets an' 'orse-guards
an' all—

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M. I.

Details for buryin'-parties, company-cooks or
supply—
Turn out the chronic Ikonas! Roll up the ——[1]
M. I.!

My 'ands are spotty with veldt-sores, my shirt is a
button an' frill,
An' the things I've used my bay'nit for would make
a tinker ill!
An' I don't know whose dam' column I'm in, nor
where we're trekkin' nor why.
I've trekked from the Vaal to the Orange once—
From the Vaal to the greasy Pongolo once—
(Or else it was called the Zambesi once)—
For now I am M. I.

That is what we are known as—we are the push you
require
For outposts all night under freezin', an' rear-guard
all day under fire.
Anything 'ot or unwholesome? Anything dusty or
dry?
Borrow a bunch of Ikonas! Trot out the ——
M. I.!

[1] Number according to taste and service of audience.

M. I.

Our Sergeant-Major's a subaltern, our Captain's a
Fusilier—
Our Adjutant's "late of Somebody's 'Orse," an' a
Melbourne auctioneer;
But you couldn't spot us at 'arf a mile from the
crackest caval-ry.
They used to talk about Lancers once,
Hussars, Dragoons, an' Lancers once,
'Elmets, pistols, an' carbines once,
But now we are M. I.

That is what we are known as—we are the orphans
they blame
For beggin' the loan of an 'ead-stall an' makin' a
mount to the same:
'Can't even look at an 'orselines but some one goes
bellerin' "Hi!
"'Ere comes a burglin' Ikona!" Footsack you
—— M. I.!

We're trekkin' our twenty miles a day an' bein'
loved by the Dutch,
But we don't hold on by the mane no more, nor lose
our stirrups—much;

M. I.

An' we scout with a senior man in charge where the 'oly white flags fly.
We used to think they were friendly once,
Didn't take any precautions once
(Once, my ducky, an' only once!)
But now we are M. I.!

That is what we are known as—we are the beggars that got
Three days "to learn equitation," an' six months o' bloomin' well trot!
Cow-guns, an' cattle, an' convoys—an' Mister De Wet on the fly—
We are the rollin' Ikonas! We are the —— M. I.!

The new fat regiments come from home, imaginin' vain V. C.'s
(The same as our talky-fighty men which are often Number Threes[1]),
But our words o' command are "Scatter" an' "Close" an' "Let your wounded lie."
We used to rescue 'em noble once,—
Givin' the range as we raised 'em once,
Gettin' 'em killed as we saved 'em once—
But now we are M. I.

[1] Horse-holders when in action, and therefore generally under cover.

M. I.

That is what we are known as—we are the lanterns
you view
After a fight round the kopjes, lookin' for men that
we knew;
Whistlin' an' callin' together, 'altin' to catch the
reply:—
"'Elp me! O 'elp me, Ikonas!" This way, the ——
M. I.!

I wish my mother could see me now, a-gatherin'
news on my own,
When I ride like a General up to the scrub and ride
back like Tod Sloan,
Remarkable close to my 'orse's neck to let the shots
go by.
We used to fancy it risky once
(Called it a reconnaissance once),
Under the charge of an orf'cer once,
But now we are M. I.

That is what we are known as—that is the song you
must say
When you want men to be Mausered at one and a
penny a day;

M. I.

We are no five-bob colonials—we are the 'ome-made
supply,
Ask for the London Ikonas! Ring up the ——
M. I.!

I wish myself could talk to myself as I left 'im a year
ago;
I could tell 'im a lot that would save 'im a lot on the
things that 'e ought to know!
When I think o' that ignorant barrack-bird, it almost
makes me cry.
I used to belong in an Army once
(Gawd! what a rum little Army once),
Red little, dead little Army once!
But now I am M. I.!

That is what we are known as—we are the men that
have been
Over a year at the business, smelt it an' felt it an'
seen.
We 'ave got 'old of the needful—*you* will be told by
and bye;
Wait till you've 'eard the Ikonas, spoke to the old
M. I.!

M. I.

Mount—march, Ikonas! Stand to your 'orses again!
Mop off the frost on the saddles, mop up the miles on
the plain.
Out go the stars in the dawnin', up goes our dust to
the sky,
Walk—trot, Ikonas! Trek jou,[1] *the old M. I.!*

[1] Get ahead.

COLUMNS

(MOBILE COLUMNS OF THE LATER WAR)

OUT o' the wilderness, dusty an' dry
(Time, an' 'igh time to be trekkin' again!)
'Oo is it 'eads to the Detail Supply?
(A section, a pompom, an' six 'undred men).

'Ere comes the clerk with 'is lantern an' keys
(Time, an' 'igh time to be trekkin' again!)
"Surplus of everything—draw what you please
"For the section, the pompom, an' six 'undred men."

"What are our orders an' where do we lay?"
(Time, an' 'igh time to be trekkin' again!)
"You came after dark—you will leave before day,
"You section, you pompom, an' six 'undred men!"

COLUMNS

Down the tin street, 'alf awake an' unfed,
'Ark to 'em blessin' the Gen'ral in bed!

Now by the church an' the outspan they wind—
Over the ridge an' it's all lef' be'ind
For the section, etc.

Soon they will camp as the dawn 's growin' grey,
Roll up for coffee an' sleep while they may—
The section, etc.

Read their 'ome letters, their papers an' such,
For they'll move after dark to astonish the Dutch
With a section, etc.

'Untin' for shade as the long hours pass,
Blankets on rifles or burrows in grass,
Lies the section, etc.

Dossin' or beatin' a shirt in the sun,
Watchin' chameleons or cleanin' a gun,
Waits the section, etc.

With nothin' but stillness as far as you please,
An' the silly mirage stringin' islands an' seas
Round the section, etc.

So they strips off their hide an' they grills in their bones,
Till the shadows crawl out from beneath the pore stones
Towards the section, etc.

An' the Mauser-bird stops an' the jackals begin,
An' the 'orse-guard comes up an' the Gunners 'ook in
As a 'int to the pompom an' six 'undred men. . . .

Off through the dark with the stars to rely on—
(Alpha Centauri an' somethin' Orion)
Moves the section, etc.

Same bloomin' 'ole which the ant-bear 'as broke,
Same bloomin' stumble an' same bloomin' joke
Down the section, etc.

Same "which is right?" where the cart-tracks divide,
Same "give it up" from the same clever guide
To the section, etc.

COLUMNS

Same tumble-down on the same 'idden farm,
Same white-eyed Kaffir 'oo gives the alarm
Of the section, etc.

Same shootin' wild at the end o' the night,
Same flyin' tackle an' same messy fight
By the section, etc.

Same ugly 'iccup an' same 'orrid squeal,
When it's too dark to see an' it's too late to feel
In the section, etc.

(Same batch of prisoners, 'airy an' still,
Watchin' their comrades bolt over the 'ill
From the section, etc.)

Same chilly glare in the eye of the sun
As 'e gets up displeasured to see what was done
By the section, etc.

Same splash o' pink on the stoep or the kraal,
An' the same quiet face which 'as finished with all
In the section, the pompom, an' six 'undred men.

COLUMNS

Out o' the wilderness, dusty an' dry
(Time, an' 'igh time to be trekkin' again!)
'Oo is it 'eads to the Detail Supply?
(A section, a pompom, an' six 'undred men).

TWO KOPJES

(MADE YEOMANRY)

ONLY two African kopjes,
  Only the cart-tracks that wind
Empty and open between 'em,
  Only the Transvaal behind;
Only an Aldershot column
  Marching to conquer the land . . .
Only a sudden and solemn
  Visit, unarmed, to the Rand.

Then scorn not the African kopje,
  The kopje that smiles in the heat,
The wholly unoccupied kopje,
  The home of Cornelius and Piet.
You can never be sure of your kopje,
  But of this be you blooming well sure,
A kopje is always a kopje,
  And a Boojer is always a Boer!

TWO KOPJES

Only two African kopjes,
  Only the vultures above,
Only baboons—at the bottom,
  Only some buck on the move;
Only a Kensington draper
  Only pretendin' to scout . . .
Only bad news for the paper,
  Only another knock-out.

Then mock not the African kopje,
  And rub not your flank on its side,
The silent and simmering kopje,
  The kopje beloved by the guide.
You can never be, etc.

Only two African kopjes,
  Only the dust of their wheels,
Only a bolted commando,
  Only our guns at their heels . . .
Only a little barb-wire,
  Only a natural fort,
Only "by sections retire,"
  Only "regret to report"!

Then mock not the African kopje,
  Especially when it is twins,
One sharp and one table-topped kopje,
  For that's where the trouble begins.
You can never be, etc.

Only two African kopjes
  Baited the same as before—
Only we've had it so often,
  Only we're taking no more . . .
Only a wave to our troopers,
  Only our flanks swinging past,
Only a dozen voorloopers,
  Only *we've* learned it at last!

Then mock not the African kopje,
  But take off your hat to the same,
The patient, impartial old kopje,
  The kopje that taught us the game!
For all that we knew in the Columns,
  And all they've forgot on the Staff,
We learned at the fight o' Two Kopjes,
  Which lasted two years an' a half.

TWO KOPJES

O mock not the African kopje,
Not even when peace has been signed—
The kopje that isn't a kopje—
The kopje that copies its kind.
You can never be sure of your kopje,
But of this be you blooming well sure,
That a kopje is always a kopje,
And a Boojer is always a Boer!

THE INSTRUCTOR

(CORPORALS)

AT times when under cover I 'ave said,
To keep my spirits up an' raise a laugh,
'Earin' 'im pass so busy over-'ead—
Old Nickel Neck, 'oo isn't on the Staff—
"There's one above is greater than us all."

Before 'im I 'ave seen my Colonel fall,
An' watched 'im write my Captain's epitaph,
So that a long way off it could be read—
He *'as* the knack o' makin' men feel small—
Old Whistle Tip, 'oo isn't on the Staff.

There is no sense in fleein' (I 'ave fled),
Better go on an' do the belly-crawl,
An' 'ope 'e'll 'it some other man instead
Of you 'e seems to 'unt so speshual—
Fitzy van Spitz, 'oo isn't on the Staff.

THE INSTRUCTOR

An' thus in mem'ry's gratis biograph,
Now that the show is over, I recall
The peevish voice an' 'oary mushroom 'ead
Of 'im we owned was greater than us all,
'Oo give instruction to the quick an' the dead—
The Shudderin' Beggar not upon the Staff.

THE MARRIED MAN

The bachelor will miss you clear
To fight another day;
But the married man, 'e says "No fear!"
'E wants you out of the way
Of 'Im an' 'Er an' It
(An' 'is road to 'is farm or the sea),
'E wants to finish 'is little bit,
An' 'e wants to go 'ome to 'is tea.

The bachelor 'e fights 'is fight
An' stretches out an' snores;
But the married man sits up all night—
For 'e don't like out o' doors:
'E'll strain an' listen an' peer
An' give the first alarm—
For the sake o' the breathin' 'e's used to 'ear
An' the 'ead on the thick of 'is arm.

The bachelor may risk 'is 'ide
To 'elp you when you're downed;
But the married man will wait beside
Till the ambulance comes round.
'E'll take your 'ome address
An' all you've time to say,
Or if 'e sees there's 'ope, 'e'll press
Your art'ry 'alf the day—

THE MARRIED MAN

For 'Im an' 'Er an' It
  (An' One from Three leaves Two),
For 'e knows you wanted to finish your bit,
  An' 'e knows 'oo's wantin' you.
Yes, 'Im an' 'Er an' It
  (Our 'oly One in Three),
We're all of us anxious to finish our bit,
  An' we want to get 'ome to our tea!

Yes, It an' 'Er an' 'Im,
  Which often makes me think
The married man must sink or swim
  An'—'e can't afford to sink!
Oh 'Im an' It an' 'Er
  Since Adam an' Eve began,
So I'd rather fight with the bachel*er*
  An' be nursed by the married man!

LICHTENBERG

(N. S. W. CONTINGENT)

SMELLS are surer than sounds or sights
To make your heart-strings crack—
They start those awful voices o' nights
That whisper, "Old man, come back."
That must be why the big things pass
And the little things remain,
Like the smell of the wattle by Lichtenberg,
Riding in, in the rain.

There was some silly fire on the flank
And the small wet drizzling down—
There were the sold-out shops and the bank
And the wet, wide-open town;
And we were doing escort-duty
To somebody's baggage-train,
And I smelt wattle by Lichtenberg—
Riding in, in the rain.

LICHTENBERG

It was all Australia to me—
  All I had found or missed:
Every face I was crazy to see,
  And every woman I'd kissed:
All that I shouldn't ha' done, God knows!
  (As He knows I'll do it again),
That smell of wattle round Lichtenberg,
  Riding in, in the rain!

I saw Sydney the same as ever,
  The picnics and brass-bands;
And the little homestead on Hunter River
  And my new vines joining hands.
It all came over me in one act
  Quick as a shot through the brain—
With the smell of the wattle round Lichtenberg,
  Riding in, in the rain!

I have forgotten a hundred fights,
  But one I shall not forget—
With the raindrops bunging up my sights
  And my eyes bunged up with wet;
And through the crack and the stink of the cordite
  (Ah Christ! My country again!)
The smell of the wattle by Lichtenberg,
  Riding in, in the rain!

STELLENBOSH

(COMPOSITE COLUMNS)

THE General 'eard the firin' on the flank
  An' 'e sent a mounted man to bring 'im back,
The silly, pushin' person's name an' rank,
  'Oo'd dared to answer Brother Boer's attack.
For there might 'ave been a serious engagement,
  An' 'e might 'ave wasted 'alf a dozen men;
So 'e ordered 'im to stop 'is operations round the
    kopjes,
  An' 'e told 'im off before the Staff at ten!

An' it all goes into the laundry,
But it never comes out in the wash,
'Ow we're sugared about by the old men
('Eavy-sterned amateur old men!)
That 'amper an' 'inder an' scold men
For fear o' Stellenbosh!

STELLENBOSH

The General 'ad " produced a great effect,"
  The General 'ad the country cleared—almost;
The General "'ad no reason to expect,"
  And the Boers 'ad us bloomin' well on toast!
For we might 'ave crossed the drift before the
    twilight,
  Instead o' sittin' down an' takin' root;
But we was not allowed, so the Boojers scooped the
    crowd,
  To the last survivin' bandolier an' boot.

The General saw the farm'ouse in 'is rear,
  With its stoep so nicely shaded from the sun;
Sez 'e, " I'll pitch my tabernacle 'ere,"
  An' 'e kept us muckin' round till 'e 'ad done.
For 'e might 'ave caught the confluent pneumonia
  From sleepin' in his gaiters in the dew;
So 'e took a book an' dozed while the other columns
    closed
  And ——'s commando out an' trickled through!

The General saw the mountain-range ahead,
  With their 'elios showin' saucy on the 'eight,
So 'e 'eld us to the level ground instead,
  An' telegraphed the Boojers wouldn't fight.

STELLENBOSH

For 'e might 'ave gone an' sprayed 'em with a
pompom,
Or 'e might 'ave slung a squadron out to see—
But 'e wasn't takin' chances in them 'igh an' 'ostile
kranzes—
He was markin' time to earn a K.C.B.

The General got 'is decorations thick
(The men that backed 'is lies could not complain),
The Staff 'ad D.S.O.'s till we was sick,
An' the soldier—'ad the work to do again!
For 'e might 'ave known the District was a 'otbed,
Instead of 'andin' over, upside-down,
To a man 'oo 'ad to fight 'alf a year to put it right,
While the General went an' slandered 'im in town!

An' it all went into the laundry,
But it never came out in the wash.
We were sugared about by the old men
(Panicky, perishin' old men)
That 'amper an' 'inder an' scold men
For fear o' Stellenbosh!

HALF-BALLAD OF WATERVAL

WHEN by the labour of my 'ands
I've 'elped to pack a transport tight
With prisoners for foreign lands,
I ain't transported with delight.
I know it's only just an' right,
But yet it somehow sickens me,
For I 'ave learned at Waterval
The meanin' of captivity.

Be'ind the pegged barb-wire strands,
Beneath the tall electric light,
We used to walk in bare-'ead bands,
Explainin' 'ow we lost our fight.
An' that is what they'll do to-night
Upon the steamer out at sea,
If I 'ave learned at Waterval
The meanin' of captivity.

HALF-BALLAD OF WATERVAL

They'll never know the shame that brands—
  Black shame no livin' down makes white,
The mockin' from the sentry-stands,
  The women's laugh, the gaoler's spite.
  We are too bloomin' much polite,
    But that is 'ow I'd 'ave us be . . .
Since I 'ave learned at Waterval
    The meanin' of captivity.

They'll get those draggin' days all right,
  Spent as a foreigner commands,
An' 'orrors of the locked-up night,
  With 'Ell's own thinkin' on their 'ands.
  I'd give the gold o' twenty Rands
    (If it was mine) to set 'em free . . .
For I 'ave learned at Waterval
    The meanin' of captivity!

PIET

(REGULAR OF THE LINE)

I DO not love my Empire's foes,
  Nor call 'em angels; still,
What *is* the sense of 'atin' those
  'Oom you are paid to kill?
So, barrin' all that foreign lot
  Which only joined for spite,
Myself, I'd just as soon as not
  Respect the man I fight.
    Ah there, Piet!—'is trousies to 'is knees,
    'Is coat-tails lyin' level in the bullet-
      sprinkled breeze;
    'E does not lose 'is rifle an' 'e does not lose
      'is seat,
    I've known a lot o' people ride a dam' sight
      worse than Piet!

PIET

I've 'eard 'im cryin' from the ground
  Like Abel's blood of old,
An' skirmished out to look, an' found
  The beggar nearly cold;
I've waited on till 'e was dead
  (Which couldn't 'elp 'im much),
But many grateful things 'e's said
  To me for doin' such.
    Ah there, Piet! whose time 'as come to die,
    'Is carcase past rebellion, but 'is eyes
      inquirin' why.
    Though dressed in stolen uniform with
      badge o' rank complete,
    I've known a lot o' fellers go a dam'
      sight worse than Piet.

An' when there wasn't aught to do
  But camp and cattle-guards,
I've fought with 'im the 'ole day through
  At fifteen 'undred yards;
Long afternoons o' lyin' still,
  An' 'earin' as you lay
The bullets swish from 'ill to 'ill
  Like scythes among the 'ay.
    Ah there, Piet!—be'ind 'is stony kop,
    With 'is Boer bread an' biltong, an' 'is flask
      of awful Dop;

PIET

'Is Mauser for amusement an' 'is pony for
retreat,
I've known a lot o' fellers shoot a dam' sight
worse than Piet.

He's shoved 'is rifle 'neath my nose
Before I'd time to think,
An' borrowed all my Sunday clo'es
An' sent me 'ome in pink;
An' I 'ave crept (Lord, 'ow I've crept!)
On 'ands an' knees I've gone,
And spoored and floored and caught and kept
An' sent him to Ceylon!
Ah there, Piet!—you've sold me many a
pup,
When week on week alternate it was you
an' me "'ands up!"
But though I never made *you* walk man-
naked in the 'eat,
I've known a lot of fellers stalk a dam' sight
worse than Piet.

From Plewman's to Marabastad,
From Ookiep to De Aar,
Me an' my trusty friend 'ave 'ad,
As you might say, a war;
But seein' what both parties done
Before 'e owned defeat,

FORGOT ALL MY SUNDAY CLOTHES AN' SENT
ME 'OME IN PINK

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PIET

I ain't more proud of 'avin' won,
  Than I am pleased with Piet.
    Ah there, Piet!—picked up be'ind the
      drive!
    The wonder wasn't 'ow 'e fought, but 'ow
      'e kep' alive,
    With nothin' in 'is belly, on 'is back, or to
      'is feet—
    I've known a lot o' men behave a dam'
      sight worse than Piet.

No more I'll 'ear 'is rifle crack
  Along the block'ouse fence—
The beggar's on the peaceful tack,
  Regardless of expense.
For countin' what 'e eats an' draws,
  An' gifts an' loans as well,
'E's gettin' 'alf the Earth, because
  'E didn't give us 'Ell!
    Ah there, Piet! with your brand-new
      English plough,
    Your gratis tents an' cattle, an' your most
      ungrateful frow.
    You've made the British taxpayer rebuild
      your country-seat—
    I've known some pet battalions charge a
      dam' sight less than Piet.

"WILFUL-MISSING"

THERE is a world outside the one you know,
To which for curiousness 'Ell can't compare—
It is the place where "wilful-missings" go,
As we can testify, for we are there.

You may 'ave read a bullet laid us low,
That we was gathered in "with reverent care"
And buried proper. But it was not so,
As we can testify, for we are there.

They can't be certain—faces alter so
After the old aasvogel's 'ad 'is share;
The uniform's the mark by which they go—
And—ain't it odd?—the one we best can spare.

We might 'ave seen our chance to cut the show—
Name, number, record, an' begin elsewhere—
Leavin' some not too late-lamented foe
One funeral—private—British—for 'is share.

"WILFUL-MISSING"

We may 'ave took it yonder in the Low
  Bush-veldt that sends men stragglin' unaware
Among the Kaffirs, till their columns go,
  An' they are left past call or count or care.

We might 'ave been your lovers long ago,
  'Usbands or children—comfort or despair.
Our death (an' burial) settles all we owe,
  An' why we done it is our own affair.

Marry again, and we will not say no,
  Nor come to bastardize the kids you bear:
Wait on in 'ope—you've all your life below
  Before you'll ever 'ear us on the stair.

There is no need to give our reasons, though
  Gawd knows we all 'ad reasons which were fair;
But other people might not judge 'em so,
  And now it doesn't matter what they were.

What man can size or weigh another's woe?
  There are some things too bitter 'ard to bear.
Suffice it we 'ave finished—Domino!
  As we can testify, for we are there,
In the side-world where "wilful-missings" go.

UBIQUE

THERE is a word you often see, pronounce it as you may—
"You bike," "you bykwe," "ubbikwe"—alludin' to R. A.
It serves 'Orse, Field, an' Garrison as motto for a crest,
An' when you've found out all it means I'll tell you 'alf the rest.

Ubique means the long-range Krupp be'ind the low-range 'ill—
Ubique means you'll pick it up an' while you do stand still.
Ubique means you've caught the flash an' timed it by the sound.
Ubique means five gunners' 'ash before you've loosed a round.

UBIQUE

Ubique means Blue Fuse, an' make the 'ole to sink
the trail.
Ubique means stand up an' take the Mauser's 'alf-
mile 'ail.
Ubique means the crazy team not God nor man can
'old.
Ubique means that 'orse's scream which turns your
innards cold!

Ubique means "Bank, 'Olborn, Bank—a penny all
the way"—
The soothin', jingle-bump-an'-clank from day to
peaceful day.
Ubique means "They've caught De Wet, an' now
we shan't be long."
Ubique means "I much regret, the beggar's goin'
strong!"

Ubique means the tearin' drift where, breech-blocks
jammed with mud,
The khaki muzzles duck an' lift across the khaki
flood.
Ubique means the dancin' plain that changes rocks
to Boers.
Ubique means mirage again an' shellin' all
outdoors.

UBIQUE

Ubique means " Entrain at once for Grootdefeat-
fontein "!
Ubique means " Off-load your guns "—at midnight
in the rain!
Ubique means " More mounted men. Return all
guns to store."
Ubique means the R. A. M. R. Infantillery Corps!

Ubique means that warnin' grunt the perished
linesman knows,
When o'er 'is strung an' sufferin' front the shrapnel
sprays 'is foes;
An' as their firin' dies away the 'usky whisper runs
From lips that 'aven't drunk all day: " The Guns!
Thank Gawd, the Guns!"

Extreme, depressed, point-blank or short, end-first
or any 'ow,
From Colesberg Kop to Quagga's Poort—from
Ninety-Nine till now—
By what I've 'eard the others tell an' I in spots 'ave
seen,
There's nothin' this side 'Eaven or 'Ell Ubique
doesn't mean!

THE RETURN

(ALL ARMS)

PEACE is declared, an' I return
To 'Ackneystadt, but not the same;
Things 'ave transpired which made me learn
The size and meanin' of the game.
I did no more than others did,
I don't know where the change began;
I started as a average kid,
I finished as a thinkin' man.

If England was what England seems
An' not the England of our dreams,
But only putty, brass, an' paint,
'Ow quick we'd drop 'er! But she
ain't!

THE RETURN

Before my gappin' mouth could speak
I 'eard it in my comrade's tone;
I saw it on my neighbour's cheek
Before I felt it flush my own.
An' last it come to me—not pride,
Nor yet conceit, but on the 'ole
(If such a term may be applied),
The makin's of a bloomin' soul.

Rivers at night that cluck an' jeer,
Plains which the moonshine turns to sea,
Mountains that never let you near,
An' stars to all eternity;
An' the quick-breathin' dark that fills
The 'ollows of the wilderness,
When the wind worries through the 'ills—
These may 'ave taught me more or less.

Towns without people, ten times took,
An' ten times left an' burned at last;
An' starvin' dogs that come to look
For owners when a column passed;
An' quiet, 'omesick talks between
Men, met by night, you never knew
Until—'is face—by shellfire seen—
Once—an' struck off. They taught me too.

THE RETURN

The day's lay-out—the mornin' sun
  Beneath your 'at-brim as you sight;
The dinner-'ush from noon till one,
  An' the full roar that lasts till night;
An' the pore dead that look so old
  An' was so young an hour ago,
An' legs tied down before they're cold—
  These are the things which make you know.

Also Time runnin' into years—
  A thousand Places left be'ind—
An' Men from both two 'emispheres
  Discussin' things of every kind;
So much more near than I 'ad known,
  So much more great than I 'ad guessed—
An' me, like all the rest, alone—
  But reachin' out to all the rest!

So 'ath it come to me—not pride,
  Nor yet conceit, but on the 'ole
(If such a term may be applied),
  The makin's of a bloomin' soul.
But now, discharged, I fall away
  To do with little things again. . . .
Gawd, 'oo knows all I cannot say,
  Look after me in Thamesfontein!

THE RETURN

If England was what England seems
An' not the England of our dreams,
But only putty, brass, an' paint,
'Ow quick we'd chuck 'er! But she
ain't!

RECESSIONAL

(1897)

GOD of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The captains and the kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;
On dune and headland sinks the fire:

RECESSIONAL

Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
  Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
  Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
  Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
  In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
  And guarding, calls not Thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word—
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

Amen.

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